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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES.

FOURTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

3 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CXVIII.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE SEVENTEENTH DAY OF FEBRUARY
TO THE FIFTH DAY OF MARCH, 1903.

FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION.

1903.

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THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

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IN THE

FOURTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

OF

THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

3 EDWARD VII. 1903.

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218	Clancarty, William Frederick Viscount. (*Earl of Clancarty*)
382	Clanwilliam, Richard James Lord. (*Earl of Clanwilliam*)
55 & 112	Clarendon, Edward Hyde Earl of. (*Lord Chamberlain of the Household*)
387	Clements, Charles Lord. (*Earl of Leitrim*)
288	Clifford of Chudleigh, Lewis Henry Hugh Lord
268	Clinton, Charles Henry Rolle Lord
342	Clonbrock, Luke Gerald Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
394	Cloncurry, Valentine Frederick Lord
203	Cobham, Charles George Viscount
364	Colchester, Reginald Charles Edward Lord
470	Coleridge, Bernard John Seymour Lord
237	Colville of Culross, Charles John Lord
219	Combermere, Francis Lynch Wellington Viscount
421	Congleton, Henry Lord
2	Connaught and Strathearn, His Royal Highness Arthur William Patrick Albert Duke of
173	Cottenham, Kenelm Charles Edward Earl of
472	Cottesloe, Thomas Francis Lord
77	Coventry, George William Earl of
174	Cowley, Henry Arthur Mornington Earl
93	Cowper, Francis Thomas de Grey Earl
192	Cranbrook, Gathorne Earl of
585	Cranworth, Bertram Francis Lord
129	Craven, William George Robert Earl of
545	Crawshaw, Thomas Lord
195	Crewe, Robert Offley Ashburton Earl of
344	Crofton, Edward Henry Churchill Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
199	Cromer, Evelyn Earl of
229	Cross, Richard Assheton Viscount
25	Cumberland and Teviotdale, His Royal Highness Ernest Augustus William Adolphus George Fredk. Duke of
582	Currie, Philip Henry Wodehouse Lord

D

90	Dartmouth, William Heneage Earl of
179	Dartrey, Vesey Earl of
559	Davey, Horace Lord. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)
573	Dawnay, Hugh Richard Lord. (*Viscount Downe*)
267	de Clifford, Jack Southwell Lord
423	De Freyne, Arthur Lord
107	De La Warr, Gilbert Geo. Reginald Earl
398	De L'Isle and Dudley, Philip Lord
409	De Mauley, William Ashley Webb Lord
190	de Montalt, Cornwallis Earl
533	De Ramsey, William Henry Lord
264	de Ros, Dudley Charles Lord
395	De Saumarez, James St. Vincent Lord
503	de Vesci, John Robert William Lord. (*Viscount de Vesci*)
371	Delamere, Hugh Lord

62	Denbigh, Rudolph Robert Basil Aloysius Augustine Earl of
396	Denman, Thomas Lord
514	Deramore, Robert Wilfrid Lord
57	Derby, Frederick Arthur Earl of
495	Derwent, Harcourt Lord
60	Devon, Henry Hugh Earl of
8 & 17	Devonshire, Spencer Compton Duke of. (*Lord President of the Council*)
306	Digby, Edward Henry Trafalgar Lord
309	Dinevor, Arthur de Cardonnel Lord
71	Doncaster, William Henry Walter Earl of. (*Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry*)
284	Dormer, Ronald John Lord
474	Douglas, Charles Alexander Lord. (*Earl of Home*)
121	Drogheda, Ponsonby William Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
165	Ducie, Henry John Earl of
176	Dudley, William Humble Earl of
51	Dufferin and Ava, Terence John Temple Marquess of
347	Dunalley, Henry O'Callaghan Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
337	Dunboyne, Robert St. John Fitz-Walter Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
88	Dundonald, Douglas Mackinnon Baillie Hamilton Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
548	Dunleath, Henry Lyle Lord
390	Dunmore, Charles Adolphus Lord. (*Earl of Dunmore*)
456	Dunning, John Lord. (*Lord Rollo*)
162	Durham, John George Earl of
241	Durham, Handley Carr Glynn Bishop of

E

429	Ebury, Robert Wellesley Lord
164	Effingham, Henry Alexander Gordon Earl of
196	Egerton, Wilbraham Earl
151	Eldon, John Earl of
422	Elgin, Victor Alexander Lord. (*Earl of Elgin and Kincardine*)
351	Ellenborough, Edward Downes Lord
171	Ellesmere, Francis Charles Granville Earl of
516	Elphinstone, Sidney Herbert Lord
250	Ely, Alwyne Bishop of
471	Emly, Thomas William Gaston Lord
354	Erskine, William Macnaghten Lord
233	Esher, Reginald Baliol Viscount
69	Essex, George Devereux de Vere Earl of
466	Ettrick, William John George Lord. (*Lord Napier*)
39	Exeter, William Thomas Brownlow Marquess of
216	Exmouth, Edward Addington Hargreaves Viscount

F

573	Fairlie, David Lord. (*Earl of Glasgow*)
201	Falkland, Byron Plantagenet Viscount. (*Elected for Scotland*)
204	Falmouth, Evelyn Edward Thomas Viscount
579	Farquhar, Horace Brand Lord
553	Farrer, Thomas Cecil Lord
476	Fermanagh, John Henry Lord. (*Earl Erne*)
89	Ferrers, Sewallis Edward Earl
180	Feversham, William Ernest Earl of
537	Field, William Ventris Lord
29	Fife, Alexander William George Duke of
385	Fingall, Arthur James Francis Lord. (*Earl of Fingall*)
323	Fisherwick, Geo. Augustus Hamilton Lord. (*Marquess of Donegall*)
437	Fitzhardinge, Charles Paget Fitzhardinge Lord
103	Fitzwilliam, William Charles De Meuron Earl
308	Foley, Henry Thomas Lord
291	Forbes, Horace Courtenay Gammell Lord. (*Elected for Scotland*)
372	Forester, Cecil Theodore Lord
116	Fortescue, Hugh Earl
362	Foxford, William Henry Edmond de Vere Sheaffe Lord. (*Earl of Limerick*)

G

324	Gage, Henry Charles Lord. (*Viscount Gage*)
170	Gainsborough, Charles William Francis Earl of
357	Gardner, ——— Lord
480	Gerard, Frederick John Lord
374	Gifford, Edric Frederic Lord
583	Glanusk, Joseph Russell Lord
566	Glenesk, Algernon Lord
243	Gloucester, Charles John Bishop of
215	Gordon, John Campbell Viscount. (*Earl of Aberdeen*)
453	Gormanston, Jenico William Joseph Lord. (*Viscount Gormanston*)
234	Goschen, George Joachim Viscount
223	Gough, Hugh Viscount
12	Grafton, Augustus Charles Lennox Duke of
96	Graham, Douglas Beresford Malise Ronald Earl. (*Duke of Montrose*)
356	Granard, Bernard Arthur William Patrick Hastings Lord. (*Earl of Granard*)
313	Grantley, John Richard Brinsley Lord
163	Granville, Granville George Earl
597	Grenfell, Francis Wallace Lord
463	Greville, Algernon William Fulke Lord
139	Grey, Albert Henry George Earl
270	Grey de Ruthyn, Rawdon George Grey Lord
520	Grimthorpe, Edmund Lord
361	Grinstead, Lowry Egerton Lord (*Earl of Enniskillen*)
104	Guilford, Frederick George Earl of
333	Gwydir, Peter Robert Lord

H

83	Haddington, George Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
484	Haldon, Lawrence Hesketh Lord
581	Haliburton, Arthur Lawrence Lord
224	Halifax, Charles Lindley Viscount
6 & 197	Halsbury, Hardinge Stanley Earl of. (*Lord High Chancellor*)
524	Hamilton of Dalzell, Gavin George Lord
227	Hampden, Henry Robert Viscount
473	Hampton, Herbert Perrott Murray Lord
222	Hardinge, Henry Charles Viscount
105	Hardwicke, Albert Edward Philip Henry Earl of
458	Hare, William Lord. (*Earl of Listowel*)
142	Harewood, Henry Ulick Earl of
477	Harlech, William Richard Lord
99	Harrington, Charles Augustus Earl of
363	Harris, George Robert Canning Lord
141	Harrowby, John Herbert Dudley Earl of
445	Hartismere, Charles Henry Chandos Lord. (*Lord Henniker*)
266	Hastings, George Manners Lord
400	Hatherton, Edward George Percy Lord
210	Hawarden, Cornwallis Viscount. (*Elected for Ireland*) (*In another place as Earl de Montalt*)
307	Hawke, Martin Bladen Lord
555	Hawkesbury, Cecil George Savile Lord
298	Hay, Archibald Fitzroy George Lord. (*Earl of Kinnoul*)
343	Headley, Charles Mark Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
568	Heneage, Edward Lord
200	Hereford, Robert Viscount
259	Hereford, John Bishop of
504	Herries, Marmaduke Francis Lord
517	Herschell, Richard Farrer Lord
37	Hertford, Hugh de Grey Marquess of
380	Heytesbury, William Frederick Lord
221	Hill, Rowland Richard Viscount
518	Hillingdon, Charles William Lord
111	Hillsborough, Arthur Wills John Wellington Trumbull Blundell Earl of. (*Marquess of Downshire*)
519	Hindlip, Charles Lord
510	Hobhouse, Arthur Lord
575	Holm Patrick, Hans Wellesley Lord
207	Hood, Francis Wheler Viscount
496	Hothfield, Henry James Lord

459 Howard of Glossop, Francis Edward Lord

280 Howard de Walden, Thomas Evelyn Lord

152 Howe, George Richard Penn Earl

493 Howth, William Ulick Tristram Lord. (*Earl of Howth*)

58 Huntingdon, Warner Francis John Plantagenet Earl of

217 Hutchinson, Richard Walter John Viscount. (*Earl of Donoughmore*)

446 Hylton, Hylton George Hylton Lord

I

189 Iddesleigh, Walter Stafford Earl of

106 Ilchester, Henry Edward Earl of

338 Inchiquin, Lucius William Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)

167 Innes, Henry John Earl. (*Duke of Roxburghe*)

576 Inverclyde, George Arbuthnot Lord

538 Iveagh, Edward Cecil Lord

J

564 James, Henry Lord

78 Jersey, Victor Albert George Earl of

K

541 Kelvin, William Lord

388 Kenlis, Geoffrey Thomas Lord. (*Marquess of Headfort*)

426 Kenmare, Valentine Augustus Lord. (*Earl of Kenmare*)

443 Kenry, Windham Thomas Lord. (*Earl of Dunraven and Mount-Earl*)

522 Kensington, Hugh Lord

321 Kenyon, Lloyd Lord

365 Ker, Robert Schomberg Lord. (*Marquess of Lothian*)

449 Kesteven, John Henry Lord

593 Killanin, Martin Henry Lord.

341 Kilmaine, Francis William Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)

384 Kilmarnock, Charles Gore Lord. (*Earl of Erroll*)

155 Kilmorey, Francis Charles Earl of (*Elected for Ireland*)

178 Kimberley, John Earl of

437 Kinnaird, Arthur Fitz-Gerald Lord

570 Kinnear, Alexander Smith Lord

404 Kintore, Algern. Hawkins Thomond Lord. (*Earl of Kintore*)

593 Kinross, John Blair Lord

236 Kitchener of Khartoum and of the Vaal, Horatio Herbert Lord

528 Knollys, Francis Lord

231 Knutsford, Henry Thurstan Viscount

L

487 Lamington, Charles Wallace Alexander Napier Lord

122 Lanesborough, John Vansittart Danvers Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)

345 Langford, Hercules Edward Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)

32 Lansdowne, Henry Charles Keith Marquess of

186 Lathom, Edward George Earl of

84 Lauderdale, Frederick Henry Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)

455 Lawrence, John Hamilton Lord

433 Leconfield, Charles Henry Lord

15 Leeds, George Godolphin Duke of

168 Leicester, Thomas William Earl of

414 Leigh, William Henry Lord

206 Leinster, Maurice Viscount. (*Duke of Leinster*)

86 Leven and Melville, Ronald Ruthven Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)

161 Lichfield, Thomas Francis Earl of

255 Lichfield, Augustus Bishop of

335 Lilford, John Lord

248 Lincoln, Edward Bishop of

589 Lindley, Nathaniel Lord. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)

64 Lindsey, Montague Peregrine Albemarle Earl of

511 Lingen, Ralph Robert Wheeler Lord

53 Linlithgow, John Adrian Louis Marquess of

571 Lister, Joseph Lord

232 Llandaff, Henry Viscount

245 Llandaff, Richard Bishop of

549 Llangattock, John Allan Lord

563	Loch, Edward Douglas Lord
348	Loftus, John Henry Lord. (*Marquess of Ely*)
191	Londesborough, William Francis Henry Earl of
240	London, Arthur Foley Bishop of
140	Lonsdale, Hugh Cecil Earl of
404	Lovat, Simon Joseph Lord
169	Lovelace, Ralph Gordon Earl of
304	Lovel and Holland, Augustus Arthur Lord. (*Earl of Egmont*)
125	Lucan, George Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
574	Ludlow, Henry Ludlow Lord
416	Lurgan, William Lord
185	Lytton, Victor Alexander George Robert Earl of
435	Lyveden, Courtenay Robert Percy Lord

M

95	Macclesfield, George Loveden William Henry Earl of
527	Macnaghten, Edward Lord. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)
531	Magheramorne, James Douglas Lord
119	Malmesbury, James Edward Earl of
22	Manchester, William Angus Drogo Duke of
251	Manchester, James Bishop of
289	Manners of Haddon, Henry John Brinsley Lord. (*Marquess of Granby*)
358	Manners, John Thomas Lord
113	Mansfield, William David Earl of
137	Manvers, Charles William Sydney Earl
80	Mar, John Francis Erskine Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
82	Mar and Kellie, Walter John Francis Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
18	Marlborough, Charles Richard John Duke of
540	Masham, Samuel Lord
332	Massy, John Thomas William Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
123	Mayo, Dermot Robert Wyndham Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
360	Meldrum, Charles Lord. (*Marquess of Huntly*)
212	Melville, Henry Viscount
327	Mendip, Thomas Charles Lord. (*Viscount Clifden*)
442	Meredyth, James Herbert Gustavus Meredyth Lord. (*Lord Athlumney*)
412	Methuen, Paul Sanford Lord
292	Middleton, Digby Wentworth Bayard Lord
239	Milner, Alfred Viscount
366	Minster, Victor George Henry Francis Lord. (*Marquess Conyngham*)
143	Minto, Gilbert John Earl of
444	Monck, Henry Power Charles Stanley Lord. (*Viscount Monck*)
529	Monckton, George Edmund Milnes Lord. (*Viscount Galway*)
469	Moncreiff, Henry James Lord
500	Monk Bretton, John William Lord
509	Monkswell, Robert Lord
300	Monson, Augustus Debonnaire John Lord
515	Montagu of Beaulieu, Henry John Lord
355	Monteagle, John Thomas Lord. (*Marquess of Sligo*)
417	Monteagle of Brandon, Thomas Spring Lord
148	Morley, Albert Edmund Earl of
81	Morton, Sholto George Watson Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
392	Mostyn, Llewelyn Nevill Vaughan Lord
115	Mount Edgcumbe, William Henry Earl of
539	Mount Stephen, George Lord
265	Mowbray, Charles Botolph Joseph Lord
580	Muncaster, Josslyn Francis Lord
159	Munster, Aubrey Earl of
340	Muskerry, Hamilton Matthew Fitzmaurice Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)

N

452	Napier, Robert William Lord
135	Nelson, Horatio Earl
23	Newcastle, Henry Pelham Archibald Douglas Duke of
578	Newlands, William Wallace Lord
547	Newton, Thomas Wodehouse Lord
9	Norfolk, Henry Duke of. (*Earl Marshal of England*)
47	Normanby, Constantine Charles Henry Marquess of
278	North, William Henry John Lord
40	Northampton, William George Spencer Scott Marquess of
501	Northbourne, Walter Henry Lord
183	Northbrook, Thomas George Earl of
587	Northcote, Henry Stafford Lord
87	Northesk, David John Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
506	Northington, Frederick Lord. (*Lord Henley*)
24	Northumberland, Henry George Duke of
482	Norton, Charles Bowyer Lord
257	Norwich, John Bishop of

O

591	O'Brien, Peter Lord
464	O'Hagan, Maurice Herbert Ignatius Towneley Lord
451	O'Neill, Edward Lord
130	Onslow, William Hillier Earl of
403	Oranmore and Browne, Geoffrey Henry Browne Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
138	Orford, Robert Horace Earl of
370	Oriel, Clotworthy John Eyre Lord. (*Viscount Massereene*)
450	Ormathwaite, Arthur Lord
367	Ormonde, James Edward William Theobald Lord. (*Marquess of Ormonde*)
554	Overtoun, John Campbell Lord
419	Oxenfoord, John Lord. (*Earl of Stair*)

P

230	Peel, Arthur Wellesley Viscount
54 & 59	Pembroke and Montgomery, Sidney Earl of. (*Lord Steward of the Household*)
447	Penrhyn, George Sholto Gordon Lord
262	Peterborough, Edward Carr Bishop of
281	Petre, Bernard Henry Philip Lord
550	Playfair, George James Lord
379	Plunket, William Lee Lord
391	Poltimore, Augustus Frederick George Warwick Lord
301	Ponsonby, Walter William Brabazon Lord. (*Earl of Bessborough*)
21	Portland, William John Arthur Charles James Duke of
226	Portman, William Henry Berkeley Viscount
100	Portsmouth, Newton Earl of
79	Poulett, ———— Earl
208	Powerscourt, Mervyn Edward Viscount. (*Elected for Ireland*)
505	Powerscourt, Mervyn Edward Lord. (*In another place as Viscount Powerscourt*)
134	Powis, George Charles Earl of

R

108	Radnor, Jacob Earl of
425	Raglan, George Fitz-Roy Henry Lord
475	Ramsay, Arthur George Maule Lord. (*Earl of Dalhousie*)
377	Ranfurly, Uchter John Mark Lord. (*Earl of Ranfurly*)
454	Rathdonnell, Thomas Kane Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
565	Rathmore, David Robert Lord
181	Ravensworth, Henry George Earl of
373	Rayleigh, John William Lord
494	Reay, Donald James Lord
599	Redesdale, Algernon Bertram Lord
557	Rendel, Stuart Lord
508	Revelstoke, John Lord
336	Ribblesdale, Thomas Lord
11	Richmond, Charles Henry Duke of
237	Ridley, Matthew White Viscount
48	Ripon, George Frederick Samuel Marquess of
247	Ripon, William Boyd Bishop of
198	Roberts, Frederick Sleigh Earl
586	Robertson, James Patrick Bannerman Lord. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)

260	Rochester, Edward Stuart Bishop of
314	Rodney, George Bridges Harley Dennett Lord
441	Romilly, John Gaspard Le Marchant Lord
131	Romney, Charles Earl of
381	Rosebery, Archibald Philip Lord. (*Earl of Rosebery*)
569	Rosmead, Hercules Arthur Temple Lord
136	Rosse, Lawrence Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
128	Rosslyn, James Francis Harry Earl of
407	Rossmore, Derrick Warner William Lord
507	Rothschild, Nathaniel Mayer Lord
489	Rowton, Montagu William Lord
177	Russell, John Francis Stanley Earl
19	Rutland, John James Robert Duke of

S

481	Sackville, Lionel Sackville Lord
14	St. Albans, Charles Victor Albert Aubrey De Vere Duke of
261	St. Albans, Edgar, Bishop of
253	St. Asaph, Alfred George Bishop of
263	St. Davids, John Bishop of
147	Saint Germans, Henry Cornwallis Earl of
279	St. John of Bletso, Beauchamp Moubray Lord
424	Saint Leonards, Edward Burtenshaw Lord
530	Saint Levan, John Lord
513	Saint Oswald, Rowland Lord
211	St. Vincent, Carnegie Parker Viscount
34	Salisbury, Robert Arthur Talbot Marquess of
249	Salisbury, John Bishop of
330	Saltersford, James George Henry Lord. (*Earl of Courtown*)
292	Saltoun, Alexander William Fredk. Lord. (*Elected for Scotland*)
465	Sandhurst, William Lord
68	Sandwich, Edward George Henry Earl of
352	Sandys, Augustus Frederick Arthur Lord
536	Savile, John Savile Lord
282	Saye and Sele, John Fiennes Lord
75	Scarbrough, Aldred Fredk. George Beresford Earl of
302	Scarsdale, Alfred Nathaniel Holden Lord
418	Seaton, John Reginald Upton Lord
386	Sefton, Osbert Cecil Lord. (*Earl of Sefton*)
188	Selborne, William Waldegrave Earl of
72	Shaftesbury, Anthony Earl of
542	Shand, Alexander Burns Lord
353	Sheffield, Henry North Lord. (*Earl of Sheffield*)
317	Sherborne, Edward Lennox Lord
56	Shrewsbury, Charles Henry John Earl of
483	Shute, Walter Bulkeley Lord. (*Viscount Barrington*)
594	Shuttleworth, Ughtred James Lord
213	Sidmouth, William Wells Viscount
369	Silchester, Thomas Lord. (*Earl of Longford*)
293	Sinclair, Charles William Lord. (*Elected for Scotland*)
375	Somerhill, Hubert George Lord. (*Marquess of Clanricarde*)
315	Somers, Arthur Herbert Tennyson Lord
10	Somerset, Algernon Duke of
467	Somerton, Sidney James Lord. (*Earl of Normanton*)
187	Sondes, George Edward Earl
312	Southampton, Charles Henry Lord
246	Southwell, George Bishop of
109	Spencer, John Poyntz Earl
286	Stafford, Fitzherbert Lord
521	Stalbridge, Richard de Aquila Lord
65	Stamford, William Earl of
94	Stanhope, Arthur Philip Earl
413	Stanley of Alderley, Henry Edward John Lord
556	Stanmore, Arthur Lord
329	Stewart of Garlies, Randolph Henry Lord. (*Earl of Galloway*)
153	Stradbroke, George Edward John Mowbray Earl of
172	Strafford, Francis Edmund Cecil Earl of

114	Strange, John James Hugh Henry Earl. (*Duke of Atholl*)
577	Strathcona and Mount Royal, Donald Alexander Lord
402	Stratheden, Hallyburton George Lord
499	Strathspey, James Lord. (*Earl of Seafield*)
328	Stuart of Castle Stuart, Francis James Lord. (*Earl of Moray*)
411	Sudeley, Charles Douglas Richard Lord
502	Sudley, Arthur Jocelyn Charles Lord. (*Earl of Arran*)
320	Suffield, Charles Lord
61	Suffolk and Berkshire, Henry Molyneux Paget Earl of
27	Sutherland, Cromartie Duke of
552	Swansea, Ernest Ambrose Lord

T

428	Talbot de Malahide, Richard Wogan Lord
91	Tankerville, George Montagu Earl of
154	Temple of Stowe, William Stephen Earl
393	Templemore, Henry Spencer Lord
214	Templetown, Henry Edward Montagu Dorington Clotworthy Viscount. (*Elected for Ireland*)
498	Tennyson, Hallam Lord
378	Tenterden, Charles Stuart Henry Lord
285	Teynham, Henry John Philip Sidney Lord
526	Thring, Henry Lord
325	Thurlow, Thomas John Lord
479	Tollemache, Wilbraham Frederic Lord
294	Torphichen, James Walter Lord. (*Elected for Scotland*)
205	Torrington, George Master Viscount
33	Townshend, John James Dudley Stuart Marquess
434	Tredegar, Godfrey Charles Lord
488	Trevor, Arthur William Lord
254	Truro, John Bishop of
492	Tweeddale, William Montagu Lord. (*Marquess of Tweeddale*)
497	Tweedmouth, Edward Lord
318	Tyrone, Henry De La Poer Lord. (*Marquess of Waterford*)

V

156	Vane, Charles Stewart Earl. (*Marquess of Londonderry*)
274	Vaux of Harrowden, Hubert George Charles Lord
346	Ventry, Dayrolles Blakeney Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
305	Vernon, George Francis Augustus Lord
145	Verulam, James Walter Earl of
420	Vivian, George Crespigny Brabazon Lord

W

1	Wales, His Royal Highness The Prince of
97	Waldegrave, William Frederick Earl
310	Walsingham, Thomas Lord
561	Wandsworth, Sydney James Lord
558	Welby, Reginald Earle Lord
26	Wellington, Arthur Charles Duke of
368	Wemyss, Francis Richard Lord. (*Earl of Wemyss*)
415	Wenlock, Beilby Lord
275	Wentworth, Ralph Gordon Lord. (*In another place as Earl of Lovelace*)
438	Westbury, Richard Luttrell Pilkington Lord
120	Westmeath, Anthony Francis Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
28	Westminster, Hugh Richard Arthur Duke of
63	Westmorland, Anthony Mildmay Julian Earl of
182	Wharncliffe, Francis John Earl of
376	Wigan, James Ludovic Lord. (*Earl of Crawford*)
273	Willoughby de Broke, Richard Greville Lord
133	Wilton, Arthur George Earl of
485	Wimborne, Ivor Bertie Lord
31	Winchester, Henry William Montagu Marquess of
242	Winchester, Herbert Edward Bishop of
66	Winchilsea and Nottingham, Henry Stormont Earl of
274	Windsor, Robert George Lord

175 Winton, George Arnulph Earl of. (*Earl of Eglintoun*)

228 Wolseley, Garnet Joseph Viscount

462 Wolverton, Frederick Lord

401 Worlingham, Archibald Brabazon Sparrow Lord. (*Earl of Gosford*)

410 Wrottesley, Arthur Lord

383 Wynford, Henry Molyneux Lord

Y

166 Yarborough, Chas. Alfred Worsley Earl of

7 York, William Dalrymple Archbishop of

Z

52 Zetland, Lawrence Marquess of

269 Zouche of Haryngworth, Robert Nathaniel Cecil George Lord

The following Lords have Two Numbers, being Twice named in the Roll :

Earl of Halsbury, as Lord High Chancellor, and as Earl of Halsbury. (Nos. 6 and 197.)

Duke of Devonshire, as Lord President, and as Duke of Devonshire. (Nos. 8 and 17.)

Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, as Lord Steward, and as Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery. (Nos. 54 and 59.)

Earl of Clarendon, as Lord Chamberlain, and as Earl of Clarendon. (Nos. 55 and 112.)

Earl of Lovelace, as Earl of Lovelace, and as Lord Wentworth. (Nos. 169 and 275.)

Earl de Montalt, as Earl de Montalt, and as Viscount Hawarden. (Nos. 190 and 210.)

Viscount Powerscourt, as Viscount Powerscourt, and as Lord Powerscourt. (Nos. 208 and 505.)

ROLL

OF THE

LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL

IN THE

FOURTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

OF

THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

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3 EDWARD VII. 1902.

MEM.—*According to the Usage of Parliament, when the House appoints a Select Committee the Lords appointed to serve upon it are named in the Order of their Rank, beginning with the Highest; and so, when the House sends a Committee to a Conference with the Commons, the Lord highest in Rank is called first, and the rest go forth in like Order: But when the Whole House is called over for any Purpose, within the House, or for the Purpose of proceeding forth to Westminster Hall, or upon any public Solemnity, the Call begins invariably with the Junior Baron.*

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1 His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales.

2 His Royal Highness Arthur William Patrick Albert Duke of Connaught and Strathearn

3 His Royal Highness Leopold Charles Edward George Albert Duke of Albany

4 His Royal Highness George William Frederick Charles Duke of Cambridge

5 Randall Thomas Archbishop of Canterbury

6 Hardinge Stanley Earl of Halsbury, *Lord High Chancellor*

7 William Dalrymple Archbishop of York

8 Spencer Compton Duke of Devonshire, *Lord President of the Council*

9 Henry Duke of Norfolk, *Earl Marshal of England*

10 Algernon Duke of Somerset

11 Charles Henry Duke of Richmond

12 Augustus Charles Lennox Duke of Grafton

13 Henry Adelbert Wellington Fitzroy Duke of Beaufort

14 Charles Victor Albert Aubrey de Vere Duke of St. Albans

15 George Godolphin Duke of Leeds

16 Herbrand Arthur Duke of Bedford

17 Spencer Compton Duke of Devonshire. (*In another place as Lord President of the Council*)

18 Charles Richard John Duke of Marlborough

19 John James Robert Duke of Rutland

20 Alfred Douglas Duke of Brandon

21 William John Arthur Charles James Duke of Portland

22 William Angus Drogo Duke of Manchester

23 Henry Pelham Archibald Douglas Duke of Newcastle

24 Henry George Duke of Northumberland

25 His Royal Highness Ernest Augustus William Adolphus George Frederick Duke of Cumberland and Teviotdale

26 Arthur Charles Duke of Wellington

27 Cromartie Duke of Sutherland

28 Hugh Richard Arthur Duke of Westminster

29 Alexander William George Duke of Fife

30 John Douglas Sutherland Duke of Argyll

31 Henry William Montagu Marquess of Winchester

32 Henry Charles Keith Marquess of Lansdowne

33 John James Dudley Stuart Marquess Townshend

34 Robert Arthur Talbot Marquess of Salisbury.

35 Thomas Henry Marquess of Bath

36 James Marquess of Abercorn (*Duke of Abercorn*)

37 Hugh de Grey Marquess of Hertford

38 John Marquess of Bute

39 William Thomas Brownlow Marquess of Exeter

40 William George Spencer Scott Marquess of Northampton

41 John Charles Marquess Camden

42 Henry Cyril Marquess of Anglesey

43 George Henry Hugh Marquess of Cholmondeley

44 Henry Augustus Marquess of Ailesbury

45 Frederick William John Marquess of Bristol

46 Archibald Marquess of Ailsa

47 Constantine Charles Henry Marquess of Normanby

48 George Frederick Samuel Marquess of Ripon

49 William Marquess of Abergavenny

50 Gavin Marquess of Breadalbane

51 Terence John Temple Marquess of Dufferin and Ava

52 Lawrence Marquess of Zetland

53 John Adrian Louis Marquess of Linlithgow

54 Sidney Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, *Lord Steward of the Household*

55 Edward Hyde Earl of Clarendon, *Lord Chamberlain of the Household*

56 Charles Henry John Earl of Shrewsbury

57 Frederick Arthur Earl of Derby

58 Warner Francis John Plantagenet Earl of Huntingdon

59 Sidney Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery. (*In another place as Lord Steward of the Household*)

60 Henry Hugh Earl of Devon

61 Henry Molyneux Paget Earl of Suffolk and Berkshire

62 Rudolph Robert Basil Aloysius Augustine Earl of Denbigh

63 Anthony Mildmay Julian Earl of Westmorland

64 Montague Peregrine Albemarle Earl of Lindsey

65 William Earl of Stamford

66 Henry Stormont Earl of Winchilsea and Nottingham

67 Edwyn Francis Earl of Chesterfield

68 Edward George Henry Earl of Sandwich

69 George Devereux de Vere Earl of Essex

70 George James Earl of Carlisle

71 William Henry Walter Earl of Doncaster. (*Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry*)

72 Anthony Earl of Shaftesbury

73 Randal Mowbray Thomas Earl of Berkeley

74 Montagu Arthur Earl of Abingdon

75 Aldred Frederick George Beresford Earl of Scarborough

76 Arnold Allan Cecil Earl of Albemarle

77 George William Earl of Coventry

78 Victor Albert George Earl of Jersey

79 ———— Earl Poulett

80 John Francis Erskine Earl of Mar. (*Elected for Scotland*)

81 Sholto George Watson Earl of Morton. (*Elected for Scotland*)

82 Walter John Francis Earl of Mar and Kellie. (*Elected for Scotland*)

83 George Earl of Haddington. (*Elected for Scotland*)

84 Frederick Henry Earl of Lauderdale. (*Elected for Scotland*)

85 Robert Harris Carnwath Earl of Carnwath. (*Elected for Scotland*)

86 Ronald Ruthven Earl of Leven and Melville. (*Elected for Scotland*)

87 David John Earl of Northesk. (*Elected for Scotland*)

88 Douglas Mackinnon Baillie Hamilton Earl of Dundonald. (*Elected for Scotland*)

89 Sewallis Edward Earl Ferrers

90 William Heneage Earl of Dartmouth

91 George Montagu Earl of Tankerville

92 Charles Wightwick Earl of Aylesford

93 Francis Thomas De Grey Earl Cowper

94 Arthur Philip Earl Stanhope

95 George Loveden William Henry Earl of Macclesfield

96 Douglas Beresford Malise Ronald Earl Graham. (*Duke of Montrose*)

97 William Frederick Earl Waldegrave

98 Bertram Earl of Ashburnham

99 Charles Augustus Earl of Harrington

100 Newton Earl of Portsmouth

101 Francis Richard Charles Guy Earl Brooke and Earl of Warwick

102 Sidney Carr Earl of Buckinghamshire

103 William Charles De Meuron Earl Fitzwilliam

104 Frederick George Earl of Guilford

105 Albert Edward Philip Henry Earl of Hardwicke

106 Henry Edward Earl of Ilchester

107 Gilbert George Reginald Earl De La Warr

108 Jacob Earl of Radnor

109 John Poyntz Earl Spencer

110 Seymour Henry Earl Bathurst

111 Arthur Wills John Wellington Trumbull Blundell Earl of Hillsborough. (*Marquess of Downshire*)

112 Edward Hyde Earl of Clarendon. (*In another place as Lord Chamberlain of the Household*)

113 William David Earl of Mansfield

114 John James Hugh Henry Earl Strange. (*Duke of Atholl*)

115 William Henry Earl of Mount Edgcumbe

116 Hugh Earl Fortescue

117 George Edward Stanhope Molyneux Earl of Carnarvon

118 George Henry Earl Cadogan

119 James Edward Earl of Malmesbury

120 Anthony Francis Earl of Westmeath. (*Elected for Ireland*)

121 Ponsonby William Earl of Drogheda (*Elected for Ireland*)

122 John Vansittart Danvers Earl of Lanesborough. (*Elected for Ireland*)

123 Dermot Robert Wyndham Earl of Mayo. (*Elected for Ireland*)

124 Hugh Earl Annesley. (*Elected for Ireland*)

125 George Earl of Lucan. (*Elected for Ireland*)

126 Somerset Richard Earl of Belmore. (*Elected for Ireland*)

127 James Francis Earl of Bandon. (*Elected for Ireland*)

128 James Francis Harry Earl of Rosslyn

129 William George Robert Earl of Craven

130 William Hillier Earl of Onslow

131 Charles Earl of Romney
132 Francis Godolphin Earl of Chichester
133 Arthur George Earl of Wilton
134 George Charles Earl of Powis
135 Horatio Earl Nelson
136 Lawrence Earl of Rosse. (*Elected for Ireland*)
137 Charles William Sydney Earl Manvers
138 Robert Horace Earl of Orford
139 Albert Henry George Earl Grey
140 Hugh Cecil Earl of Lonsdale
141 John Herbert Dudley Earl of Harrowby
142 Henry Ulick Earl of Harewood
143 Gilbert John Earl of Minto
144 Alan Frederick Earl Cathcart
145 James Walter Earl of Verulam
146 Adelbert Wellington Brownlow Earl Brownlow
147 Henry Cornwallis Earl of St. Germans
148 Albert Edmund Earl of Morley
149 George Cecil Orlando Earl of Bradford
150 William Earl Beauchamp
151 John Earl of Eldon
152 George Richard Penn Earl Howe
153 George Edward John Mowbray Earl of Stradbroke
154 Algernon William Stephen Earl Temple of Stowe
155 Francis Charles Earl of Kilmorey (*Elected for Ireland*)
156 Charles Stewart Earl Vane. (*Marquess of Londonderry*)
157 William Archer Earl Amherst
158 Frederick Archibald Vaughan Earl Cawdor
159 Aubrey Earl of Munster
160 Robert Adam Philips Haldane Earl of Camperdown
161 Thomas Francis Earl of Lichfield
162 John George Earl of Durham
163 Granville George Earl Granville
164 Henry Alexander Gordon Earl of Effingham
165 Henry John Earl of Ducie
166 Charles Alfred Worsley Earl of Yarborough
167 Henry John Earl Innes. (*Duke of Roxburghe*)
168 Thomas William Earl of Leicester
169 Ralph Gordon Earl of Lovelace
170 Charles William Francis Earl of Gainsborough
171 Francis Charles Granville Earl of Ellesmere
172 Francis Edmund Cecil Earl of Strafford
173 Kenelm Charles Edward Earl of Cottenham
174 Henry Arthur Mornington Earl Cowley
175 George Arnulph Earl of Winton (*Earl of Eglintoun*)
176 William Humble Earl of Dudley
177 John Francis Stanley Earl Russell
178 John Earl of Kimberley
179 Vesey Earl of Dartrey
180 William Ernest Earl of Feversham
181 Henry George Earl of Ravensworth
182 Francis John Earl of Wharncliffe
183 Thomas George Earl of Northbrook
184 Herbert John Earl Cairns
185 Victor Alexander George Robert Earl of Lytton
186 Edward George Earl of Lathom
187 George Edward Earl Sondes
188 William Waldegrave Earl of Selborne
189 Walter Stafford Earl of Iddesleigh
190 Cornwallis Earl de Montalt
191 William Francis Henry Earl of Londesborough
192 Gathorne Earl of Cranbrook
193 Gilbert Henry Earl of Ancaster
194 Charles Robert Earl Carrington
195 Robert Offley Ashburton Earl of Crewe
196 Wilbraham Earl Egerton
197 Hardinge Stanley Earl of Halsbury. (*In another place as Lord High Chancellor*)
198 Frederick Sleigh Earl Roberts
199 Evelyn Earl of Cromer
200 Robert Viscount Hereford
201 Byron Plantagenet Viscount Falkland. (*Elected for Scotland*)
202 ——— Viscount Bolingbroke and St. John

203 Charles George Viscount Cobham
204 Evelyn Edward Thomas Viscount Falmouth
205 George Master Viscount Torrington
206 Maurice Viscount Leinster. (*Duke of Leinster*)
207 Francis Wheler Viscount Hood
208 Mervyn Edward Viscount Powerscourt. (*Elected for Ireland*)
209 Henry William Crosbie Viscount Bangor. (*Elected for Ireland*)
210 Cornwallis Viscount Hawarden. (*Elected for Ireland.*) (*In another place as Earl de Montalt*)
211 Carnegie Parker Viscount St. Vincent
212 Henry Viscount Melville
213 William Wells Viscount Sidmouth
214 Henry Edward Montagu Dorington Clotworthy Viscount Templetown. (*Elected for Ireland*)
215 John Campbell Viscount Gordon, (*Earl of Aberdeen*)
216 Edward Addington Hargreaves. Viscount Exmouth
217 Richard Walter John Viscount Hutchinson. (*Earl of Donoughmore*)
218 William Frederick Viscount Clancarty. (*Earl of Clancarty*)
219 Francis Lynch Wellington Viscount Combermere
220 Henry Charles Viscount Canterbury
221 Rowland Richard Viscount Hill
222 Henry Charles Viscount Hardinge
223 Hugh Viscount Gough
224 Charles Lindley Viscount Halifax
225 Alexander Nelson Viscount Bridport
226 William Henry Berkeley Viscount Portman
227 Henry Robert Viscount Hampden
228 Garnet Joseph Viscount Wolseley
229 Richard Assheton Viscount Cross
230 Arthur Wellesley Viscount Peel
231 Henry Thurstan Viscount Knutsford
232 Henry Viscount Llandaff
233 Reginald Baliol Viscount Esher
234 George Joachim Viscount Goschen
235 Matthew White Viscount Ridley
236 Horatio Herbert Viscount Kitchener of Khartoum and of the Vaal
237 Charles John Viscount Colville of Culross
238 Victor Albert Francis Charles Viscount Churchill
239 Alfred Viscount Milner
240 Arthur Foley Bishop of London
241 Handley Carr Glyn Bishop of Durham
242 ——————— Bishop of Winchester
243 Charles John Bishop of Gloucester
244 Ernest Roland Bishop of Chichester
245 Richard Bishop of Llandaff
246 George Bishop of Southwell
247 William Boyd Bishop of Ripon
248 Edward Bishop of Lincoln
249 John Bishop of Salisbury
250 Alwyne Bishop of Ely
251 James Bishop of Manchester
252 Francis John Bishop of Chester
253 Alfred George Bishop of St. Asaph
254 John Bishop of Truro
255 Angustus Bishop of Lichfield
256 John Wareing Bishop of Carlisle
257 John Bishop of Norwich
258 George Wyndham Bishop of Bath and Wells
259 John Bishop of Hereford
260 Edward Stuart Bishop of Rochester
261 Edgar Bishop of St. Albans
262 Edward Carr Bishop of Peterborough
263 John Bishop of St. David's
264 Dudley Charles Lord de Ros
265 Charles Botolph Joseph Lord Mowbray
266 George Manners Lord Hastings
267 Jack Southwell Lord de Clifford
268 Charles Henry Rolle Lord Clinton
269 Robert Nathaniel Cecil George Lord Zouche of Haryngworth
270 Rawdon George Grey Lord Grey de Ruthyn
271 Charles Edward Hastings Lord Botreaux. (*Earl of Loudoun*)
272 Ralph Francis Julian Lord Camoys

273 Richard Greville Lord Willoughby de Broke

274 Hubert George Charles Lord Vaux of Harrowden

275 Ralph Gordon Lord Wentworth. (*In another place as Earl of Lovelace*)

276 Alfred Thomas Townshend Lord Braye

277 Robert George Lord Windsor

278 William Henry John Lord North

279 Beauchamp Moubray Lord St. John of Bletso

280 Thomas Evelyn Lord Howard de Walden

281 Bernard Henry Philip Lord Petre

282 John Fiennes Lord Saye and Sele

283 John Francis Lord Arundell of Wardour

284 Ronald John Lord Dormer

285 Henry John Philip Sidney Lord Teynham

286 Fitzherbert Lord Stafford

287 George Frederick William Lord Byron

288 Lewis Henry Hugh Lord Clifford of Chudleigh

289 Henry John Brinsley Lord Manners of Haddon. (*Marquess of Granby*)

290 Henry de Vere Lord Barnard

291 Horace Courtenay Gammell Lord Forbes. (*Elected for Scotland*)

292 Alexander William Frederick Lord Saltoun. (*Elected for Scotland*)

293 Charles William Lord Sinclair. (*Elected for Scotland*)

294 James Walter Lord Torphichen. (*Elected for Scotland*)

295 Alexander Hugh Lord Balfour of Burley. (*Elected for Scotland*)

296 Alexander Charles Lord Belhaven and Stenton. (*Elected for Scotland*)

297 Richard Edmund St. Lawrence Lord Boyle. (*Earl of Cork and Orrery*)

298 Archibald Fitzroy George Lord Hay. (*Earl of Kinnoul*)

299 Digby Wentworth Bayard Lord Middleton

300 Augustus Debonnaire John Lord Monson

301 Walter William Brabazon Lord Ponsonby. (*Earl of Bessborough*)

302 Alfred Nathaniel Holden Lord Scarsdale

303 George Florance Lord Boston

304 Augustus Arthur Lord Lovel and Holland. (*Earl of Egmont*)

305 George Francis Augustus Lord Vernon

306 Edward Henry Trafalgar Lord Digby

307 Martin Bladen Lord Hawke

308 Henry Thomas Lord Foley

309 Arthur de Cardonnel Lord Dinevor

310 Thomas Lord Walsingham

311 William Lord Bagot

312 Charles Henry Lord Southampton

313 John Richard Brinsley Lord Grantley

314 George Bridges Harley Dennett Lord Rodney

315 Arthur Herbert Tennyson Lord Somers

316 Richard Henry Lord Berwick

317 Edward Lennox Lord Sherborne

318 Henry De La Poer Lord Tyrone. (*Marquess of Waterford*)

319 Richard Henry Lord Carleton. (*Earl of Shannon*)

320 Charles Lord Suffield

321 Lloyd Lord Kenyon

322 Latimer Lord Braybrooke

323 George Augustus Hamilton Lord Fisherwick. (*Marquess of Donegall*)

324 Henry Charles Lord Gage. (*Viscount Gage*)

325 Thomas John Lord Thurlow

326 William Morton Lord Auckland

327 Thomas Charles Lord Mendip, (*Viscount Clifden*)

328 Francis James Lord Stuart of Castle Stuart. (*Earl of Moray*)

329 Randolph Henry Lord Stewart of Garlies. (*Earl of Galloway*)

330 James George Henry Lord Saltersford. (*Earl of Courtown*)

331 William Lord Brodrick. (*Viscount Midleton*)

332 Augustus Cholmondeley Lord Calthorpe

333 Peter Robert Lord Gwydir
334 William Thomas Lord Bolton
335 John Lord Lilford
336 Thomas Lord Ribblesdale
337 Robert St. John FitzWalter Lord Dunboyne. (*Elected for Ireland*)
338 Lucius William Lord Inchiquin. (*Elected for Ireland*)
339 John Thomas William Lord Massy. (*Elected for Ireland*)
340 Hamilton Matthew Fitzmaurice Lord Muskerry. (*Elected for Ireland*)
341 Francis William Lord Kilmaine. (*Elected for Ireland*)
342 Luke Gerald Lord Clonbrock. (*Elected for Ireland*)
343 Charles Mark Lord Headley. (*Elected for Ireland*)
344 Edward Henry Churchill Lord Crofton. (*Elected for Ireland*)
345 Hercules Edward Lord Langford (*Elected for Ireland*)
346 Dayrolles Blakeney Lord Ventry. (*Elected for Ireland*)
347 Henry O'Callaghan Lord Dunalley (*Elected for Ireland*)
348 John Henry Lord Loftus. (*Marquess of Ely*)
349 William Lord Carysfort. (*Earl of Carysfort*)
350 George Ralph Lord Abercromby
351 Edward Downes Lord Ellenborough
352 Augustus Frederick Arthur Lord Sandys
353 Henry North Lord Sheffield. (*Earl of Sheffield*)
354 William Macnaghten Lord Erskine
355 John Thomas Lord Monteagle (*Marquess of Sligo*)
356 Bernard Arthur William Patrick Hastings Lord Granard. (*Earl of Granard*)
357 ——————— Lord Gardner
358 John Thomas Lord Manners
359 Albert Edward Lord Castlemaine. (*Elected for Ireland*)
360 Charles Lord Meldrum. (*Marquess of Huntly*)
361 Lowry Egerton Lord Grinstead. (*Earl of Enniskillen*)
362 William Henry Edmond de Vere Sheaffe Lord Foxford. (*Earl of Limerick*)
363 George Robert Canning Lord Harris
364 Reginald Charles Edward Lord Colchester
365 Robert Schomberg Lord Ker. (*Marquess of Lothian*)
366 Victor George Henry Francis Lord Minster. (*Marquess Conyngham*)
367 James Edward William Theobald Lord Ormonde. (*Marquess of Ormonde*)
368 Francis Richard Lord Wemyss. (*Earl of Wemyss*)
369 Thomas Lord Silchester. (*Earl of Longford*)
370 Clotworthy John Eyre Lord Oriel. (*Viscount Massereene*)
371 Hugh Lord Delamere
372 Cecil Theodore Lord Forester
373 John William Lord Rayleigh
374 Edric Frederic Lord Gifford
375 Hubert George Lord Somerhill. (*Marquess of Clanricarde*)
376 James Ludovic Lord Wigan. (*Earl of Crawford*)
377 Uchter John Mark Lord Ranfurly (*Earl of Ranfurly*)
378 Charles Stuart Henry Lord Tenterden
379 William Lee Lord Plunket
380 William Fredk. Lord Heytesbury
381 Archibald Philip Lord Rosebery. (*Earl of Rosebery*)
382 Richard James Lord Clanwilliam. (*Earl of Clanwilliam*)
383 Henry Molyneux Lord Wynford
384 Charles Gore Lord Kilmarnock. (*Earl of Erroll*)
385 Arthur James Francis Lord Fingall. (*Earl of Fingall*)
386 Osbert Cecil Lord Sefton. (*Earl of Sefton*)
387 Charles Lord Clements. (*Earl of Leitrim*)
388 Geoffrey Thomas Lord Kenlis. (*Marquess of Headfort*)
389 Reginald Lord Chaworth. (*Earl of Meath*)

390 Charles Adolphus Lord Dunmore. (*Earl of Dunmore*)

391 Augustus Frederick George Warwick Lord Poltimore

392 Llewelyn Nevill Vaughan Lord Mostyn

393 Henry Spencer Lord Templemore

394 Valentine Frederick Lord Cloncurry

395 James St. Vincent Lord De Saumarez

396 Thomas Lord Denman

397 James Yorke MacGregor Lord Abinger

398 Philip Lord De L'Isle and Dudley

399 Francis Denzil Edward Lord Ashburton

400 Edward George Percy Lord Hatherton

401 Archibald Brabazon Sparrow Lord Worlingham. (*Earl of Gosford*)

402 Hallyburton George Lord Stratheden

403 Geoffrey Henry Browne Lord Oranmore and Browne. (*Elected for Ireland*)

404 Simon Joseph Lord Lovat

405 William Spencer Lord Bateman

406 Algernon Hawkins Thomond Lord Kintore. (*Earl of Kintore*)

407 Derrick Warner William Lord Rossmore

408 Robert Shapland George Julian Lord Carew

409 William Ashley Webb Lord De Mauley

410 Arthur Lord Wrottesley

411 Charles Douglas Richard Lord Sudeley

412 Paul Sanford Lord Methuen

413 Henry Edward John Lord Stanley of Alderley

414 William Henry Lord Leigh

415 Beilby Lord Wenlock

416 William Lord Lurgan

417 Thomas Spring Lord Monteagle of Brandon

418 John Reginald Upton Lord Seaton

419 John Lord Oxenfoord. (*Earl of Stair*)

420 George Crespigny Brabazon Lord Vivian

421 Henry Lord Congleton

422 Victor Alexander Lord Elgin. (*Earl of Elgin and Kincardine*)

423 Arthur Lord de Freyne

424 Edward Burtenshaw Lord Saint Leonards

425 George Fitz-Roy Henry Lord Raglan

426 Valentine Augustus Lord Kenmare. (*Earl of Kenmare*)

427 Henry Lord Belper

428 Richard Wogan Lord Talbot de Malahide

429 Robert Wellesley Lord Ebury

430 Charles Compton William Lord Chesham

431 Frederic Augustus Lord Chelmsford

432 John Lord Churston

433 Charles Henry Lord Leconfield

434 Godfrey Charles Lord Tredegar

435 Courtenay Robert Percy Lord Lyveden

436 Henry Charles Lord Brougham and Vaux

437 Arthur Fitz-Gerald Lord Kinnaird

438 Richard Luttrell Pilkington Lord Westbury

439 Charles Paget Fitzhardinge Lord Fitzhardinge

440 Luke Lord Annaly

441 John Gaspard Le Marchant Lord Romilly

442 James Herbert Gustavus Meredyth Lord Meredyth. (*Lord Athlumney*)

443 Windham Thomas Lord Kenry. (*Earl of Dunraven and Mount-Earl*)

444 Henry Power Charles Stanley Lord Monck. (*Viscount Monck*)

445 Charles Henry Chandos Lord Hartismere. (*Lord Henniker*)

446 Hylton George Hylton Lord Hylton

447 George Sholto Gordon Lord Penrhyn

448 Gustavus Russell Lord Brancepeth. (*Viscount Boyne*)

449 John Henry Lord Kesteven

450 Arthur Lord Ormathwaite

451 Edward Lord O'Neill
452 Robert William Lord Napier
453 Jenico William Joseph Lord Gormanston. (*Viscount Gormanston*)
454 Thomas Kane Lord Rathdonnell. (*Elected for Ireland*)
455 John Hamilton Lord Lawrence
456 John Lord Dunning. (*Lord Rollo*)
457 James Lord Balinhard. (*Earl of Southesk*)
458 William Lord Hare. (*Earl of Listowel*)
459 Francis Edward Lord Howard of Glossop
460 Bernard Edward Barnaby Lord Castletown
461 Richard Maximilian Lord Acton
462 Frederick Lord Wolverton
463 Algernon William Fulke Lord Greville
464 Maurice Herbert Ignatius Towneley Lord O'Hagan
465 William Lord Sandhurst
466 William John George Lord Ettrick. (*Lord Napier*)
467 Sidney James Lord Somerton. (*Earl of Normanton*)
468 Henry Campbell Lord Aberdare
469 Henry James Lord Moncrieff
470 Bernard John Seymour Lord Coleridge
471 Thomas William Gaston Lord Emly
472 Thomas Francis Lord Cottesloe
473 Herbert Perrott Murray Lord Hampton
474 Charles Alexander Lord Douglas. (*Earl of Home*)
475 Arthur George Maule Lord Ramsey (*Earl of Dalhousie*)
476 John Henry Lord Fermanagh. (*Earl Erne*)
477 William Richard Lord Harlech
478 Henry Gerard Lord Alington
479 Wilbraham Frederic Lord Tollemache
480 Frederick John Lord Gerard
481 Lionel Sackville Lord Sackville
482 Charles Bowyer Lord Norton
483 Walter Bulkeley Lord Shute. (*Viscount Barrington*)
484 Lawrence Hesketh Lord Haldon
485 Ivor Bertie Lord Wimborne
486 Arthur Edward Lord Ardilaun
487 Charles Wallace Alexander Napier Lord Lamington
488 Arthur William Lord Trevor
489 Montagu William Lord Rowton
490 Edward Lord Brabourne
491 Arthur Oliver Villiers Lord Ampthill
492 William Montagu Lord Tweeddale. (*Marquess of Tweeddale*)
493 William Ulick Tristram Lord Howth. (*Earl of Howth*)
494 Donald James Lord Reay
495 Harcourt Lord Derwent
496 Henry James Lord Hothfield
497 Edward Lord Tweedmouth
498 Hallam Lord Tennyson
499 James Lord Strathspey. (*Earl of Seafield*)
500 John William Lord Monk Bretton
501 Walter Henry Lord Northbourne
502 Arthur Jocelyn Charles Lord Sudley. (*Earl of Arran*)
503 John Robert William Lord de Vesci. (*Viscount de Vesci*)
504 Marmaduke Francis Lord Herries
505 Mervyn Edward Lord Powerscourt. (*In another place as Viscount Powerscourt*)
506 Frederick Lord Northington. (*Lord Henley*)
507 Nathaniel Mayer Lord Rothschild
508 John Lord Revelstoke
509 Robert Lord Monkswell
510 Arthur Lord Hobhouse
511 Ralph Robert Wheeler Lord Lingen
512 Edward Lord Ashbourne
513 Rowland Lord Saint Oswald
514 Robert Wilfrid Lord Deramore
515 Henry John Lord Montagu of Beaulieu
516 Sidney Herbert Lord Elphinstone
517 Richard Farrer Lord Herschell
518 Charles William Lord Hillingdon
519 Charles Lord Hindlip
520 Edmund Lord Grimthorpe

521 Richard de Aquila Lord Stalbridge
522 Hugh Lord Kensington
523 Michael Arthur Lord Burton
524 Gavin George Lord Hamilton of Dalzell
525 Thomas Lord Brassey
526 Henry Lord Thring
527 Edward Lord Macnaghten. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)
528 Claude Lord Bowes. (*Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorn*)
529 George Edmund Milnes Lord Monckton. (*Viscount Galway*)
530 John Lord Saint Levan
531 James Douglas Lord Magheramorne
532 George Limbrey Lord Basing
533 William Henry Lord de Ramsey
534 Herbert Francis Lord Cheylesmore
535 Egerton Lord Addington
536 John Savile Lord Savile
537 William Ventris Lord Field
538 Edward Cecil Lord Iveagh
539 George Lord Mount Stephen
540 Samuel Lord Masham
541 William Lord Kelvin
542 Alexander Burns Lord Shand
543 George Lord Ashcombe
544 Archibald Campbell Lord Blythswood
545 Thomas Lord Crawshaw
546 William Amhurst Lord Amherst of Hackney
547 Thomas Wodehouse Lord Newton
548 Henry Lyle Lord Dunleath
549 John Allan Lord Llangattock
550 George James Lord Playfair
551 Cyril Lord Battersea
552 Ernest Ambrose Lord Swansea
553 Thomas Cecil Lord Farrer
554 John Campbell Lord Overtoun
555 Cecil George Savile Lord Hawkesbury
556 Arthur Lord Stanmore
557 Stuart Lord Rendel
558 Reginald Earle Lord Welby
559 Horace Lord Davey. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)
560 Edward Douglas Lord Loch
561 Sydney James Lord Wandsworth
562 James Lord Ashton
563 Herbert Coulstoun Lord Burghclere
564 Henry Lord James
565 David Robert Lord Rathmore
566 Algernon Lord Glenesk
567 Henry Hucks Lord Aldenham
568 Edward Lord Heneage
569 Hercules Arthur Temple Lord Rosmead
570 Alexander Smith Lord Kinnear
571 Joseph Lord Lister
572 David Lord Fairlie. (*Earl of Glasgow*)
573 Hugh Richard Lord Dawnay. (*Viscount Downe*)
574 Henry Ludlow Lord Ludlow
575 Hans Wellesley Lord Holm Patrick
576 George Arbuthnot Lord Inverclyde
577 Donald Alexander Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal
578 William Wallace Lord Newlands
579 Horace Brand Lord Farquhar
580 Josslyn Francis Lord Muncaster
581 Arthur Lawrence Lord Haliburton
582 Philip Henry Wodehouse Lord Currie
583 Joseph Russell Lord Glanusk
584 Henry Lord Brampton
585 Bertram Francis Lord Cranworth
586 James Patrick Bannerman Lord Robertson. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)
587 Henry Stafford Lord Northcote
588 John Lord Avebury
589 Nathaniel Lord Lindley. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)

590 Martin Henry Lord Killanin.
591 Peter Lord O'Brien
592 Richard Everard Lord Alverstone
593 John Blair Lord Kinross
594 Ughtred James Lord Shuttleworth
595 William Lawies Lord Allerton
596 Arthur Hugh Lord Barrymore
597 Francis Wallace Lord Greenfell
598 Francis Lord Knollys
599* Algernon Bertram Lord Redesdale

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* This number is in excess of the total Number of Lords Spiritual and Temporal, the Discrepancy being caused by the following Lords being twice named in the Roll :

Earl of Halsbury as Lord High Chancellor and as Earl of Halsbury (Nos. 6 and 197)

Duke of Devonshire as Lord President and as Duke of Devonshire (Nos. 8 and 17)

Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery as Lord Steward and as Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery (Nos. 54 and 59)

Earl of Clarendon as Lord Chamberlain and as Earl of Clarendon (Nos. 55 and 112)

Earl of Lovelace as Earl of Lovelace and as Lord Wentworth (Nos. 169 and 275)

Earl de Montalt as Earl de Montalt and as Viscount Hawarden (Nos. 190 and 210)

Viscount Powerscourt as Viscount Powerscourt and as Lord Powerscourt (Nos. 208 and 505)

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

IN THE

FOURTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT OF

THE UNITED KINGDOM

AND THE THIRD OF KING EDWARD VII.

(*Compiled at the Opening of the Session.*)

A

Abraham, William (Glamorgan, Rhondda)

Abraham, William (Cork Co., N.E.)

Acland-Hood, Captain Sir A., Bt. (Somerset, Wellington)

Agg-Gardner, James T. (Cheltenham)

Agnew, Sir Andrew N., Bt. (Edinburgh, South)

Aird, Sir John (Paddington, N.)

Allan, Sir William (Gateshead)

Allen, Charles P. (Gloucester, Stroud)

Allhusen, Aug. Henry E. (Hackney, Central)

Allsopp, Hon. George H. (Worcester)

Ambrose, Robert (Mayo, West)

Anson, Sir William R., Bt. (Oxford University)

Anstruther, Henry T. (St. Andrew's Burghs)

Archdale, Edward M. (Fermanagh, N.)

Arkwright, John S. (Hereford)

Arnold-Forster, Hugh O. (Belfast, West)

Arrol, Sir William (Ayrshire, South)

Asher, Alexander (Elgin Burghs)

Ashton, Thomas Gair (Beds., Luton)

Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert H. (Fife, East)

Atherley-Jones, Llewellyn (Durham, N.W.)

Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John (Londonderry, North)

Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H. (Sussex, Lewes)

Austin, Sir John, Bt. (York, W.R., Osgoldcross)

B

Bagot, Captain Josceline F. (Westmoreland, Kendal)

Bailey, James (Newington, Walworth)

Bain, Colonel James Robert (Cumberland, Egremont)

Baird, John G. A. (Glasgow, Central)

Balcarres, Lord (Lancashire, Chorley)

Baldwin, Alfred (Worcester, Bewdley)

Balfour, Rt. Hon. Arthur J. (Manchester, East)

Balfour, Captain Charles B. (Middlesex, Hornsey)

Balfour, Rt. Hon. Gerald William (Leeds, Central)

Balfour, K. R. (Christchurch)

Banbury, Sir Fred. George (Camberwell, Peckham)

Banes, Major George E. (West Ham, South)

Barlow, John Emmott (Somerset, Frome)

Barran, Rowland Hirst (Leeds, North)

Barry, Edward (Cork Co., South)

Barry, Sir Francis Tress, Bt. (Windsor)

Bartley, Sir George C. T. (Islington, N.)

Bathurst, Hon. Allen B. (Gloucester, Cirencester)

Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire, Chesterfield)

Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. Hicks, Bt. (Bristol, W.)

Beaumont, Wentworth C. B. (Northumberland, Hexham)

Beckett, Ernest W. (York, N.R., Whitby)

Bell, Richard (Derby)

Bentinck, Lord Henry C. (Nottingham, S.)

Beresford, Lord Charles William (Woolwich)

Bhownaggree, Sir M. M. (Bethnal Green, N.E.)

Bignold, A. (Wick Burghs)

Bigwood, James (Middlesex, Brentford)

Bill, Charles (Staffordshire, Leek)

Black, Alexander W. (Banffshire)

Blake, Edward (Longford, S.)

Blundell, Colonel H. B. H. (Lancashire, Ince)

Boland, John (Kerry, South)

Bolton, Thomas Dolling (Derbyshire, N. East)

Bond, Edward (Nottingham, E.)

Boscawen, Capt. A. S. T. Griffith (Kent, Tunbridge)

Boulnois, Edmund (Marylebone, E.)

Bousfield, William R. (Hackney, N.)

Bowles, Colonel Henry F. (Middlesex, Enfield)

Bowles, Thomas Gibson (King's Lynn)

Brand, Hon. Arthur G. (Cambridge, Wisbech)

Brassey, Albert (Oxon, Banbury)

Brigg, John (York, W.R., Keighley)

Broadhurst, Henry (Leicester)

Brodrick, Rt. Hon. W. St. John F. (Surrey, Guildford)

Brookfield, Lieut.-Col. Arthur M. (Sussex, Rye)

Brotherton, Edward Allen (Wakefield)

Brown, Sir Alex. Hargreaves (Shropshire, Wellington)

Brown, George M. (Edinburgh, Central)

Brunner, Sir John T., Bt. (Cheshire, Northwich)

Bryce, Rt. Hon. James (Aberdeen, South)

Brymer, Col. W. Ernest (Dorset, South)

Bull, William James (Hammersmith)

Bullard, Sir Harry (Norwich)

Burdett-Coutts, W. L. A. B. (Westminster)

Burke, E. Haviland (King's County, Tullamore)

Burns, John (Battersea)

Burt, Thomas (Morpeth)

Butcher, John George (York)

Buxton, Sydney Charles (Tower Hamlets, Poplar)

C

Caine, W. S. (Cornwall, Camborne)

Caldwell, James (Lanark, Mid.)

Cameron, Robert (Durham, Houghton-le-Spring)

Campbell, Rt. Hon. James A. (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities)

Campbell, J. (Armagh, South)

Campbell-Bannerman, Rt. Hon. Sir H. (Stirling Burghs)

Carew, J. Laurence (Meath, South)

Carlile, William Walter (Bucks, N.)

Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward H. (Dublin University)

Carvill, Patrick G. H. (Newry)

Causton, Richard Knight (Southwark, West)

Cautley, Henry S. (Leeds, East)

Cavendish, Richard F. (Lancashire, North Lonsdale)

Cavendish, Victor C. W. (Derbyshire, West)

Cawley, Frederick (Lancs, Prestwich)

Cayzer, Sir Charles W. (Barrow-in-Furness)

Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)

Cecil, Lord Hugh Richard H. (Greenwich)

Chamberlain, Rt.Hon. J. (Birmingham, W.)

Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. Austen (Worcestershire, East)

Chamberlayne, T. (Southampton)

Channing, Francis A. (Northampton, East)

Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry (Lincolnshire, Sleaford)

Chapman, Edward (Cheshire, Hyde)

Charrington, Spencer (Tower Hamlets, Mile End)

Churchill, Winston L. S. (Oldham)

Clancy, John J. (Dublin Co., North)

Clare, Octavius Leigh (Lancashire, Eccles)
Clive, Capt. Percy Archer (Herefordshire, Ross)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. (Ayrshire, North)
Coddington, Sir William, Bt. (Blackburn)
Cogan, Denis J. (Wicklow, East)
Coghill, Douglas H. (Stoke-upon-Trent)
Cohen, Benjamin L. (Islington, E.)
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse (Birmingham, Bordesley)
Colomb, Sir John C. R. (Great Yarmouth)
Colston, Charles Edward H. A. (Gloucester, Thornbury)
Compton, Lord Alwyne F. (Beds, Biggleswade)
Condon, Thomas J. (Tipperary, E.)
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas, Bt. (Lambeth, Kennington)
Corbett, Arch. Cameron (Glasgow, Tradeston)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward B. (Middlesex, Harrow)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, South)
Craig, R. Hunter (Lanark, Govan)
Cranborne, Viscount (Rochester)
Crean, Eugene (Cork, S.E.)
Cremer, William R. (Shoreditch, Haggerston)
Cripps, Charles A. (Lancashire, Stretford)
Crombie, John William (Kincardineshire)
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow, Camlachie)
Cross, Herbert Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile B., Bt. (Halifax)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry (Surrey, Reigate)
Cullinan, J. (Tipperary, South)
Cust, Henry J. C. (Southwark, Bermondsey)

D

Dalkeith, Earl of (Roxburgh)
Dalrymple, Sir Charles, Bt. (Ipswich)
Dalziel, James H. (Kirkcaldy Burghs)
Davenport, William Bromley (Cheshire, Macclesfield)
Davies, A. (Carmarthen Boroughs)
Davies, Col. Sir Horatio David (Chatham)
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Delany, William (Queen's Co., Ossory)
Denny, Colonel John M. (Kilmarnock Burghs)
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, North)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness)
Dewar, Sir Thomas R. (Tower Hamlets, St. George's)
Dickinson, Robert E. (Somerset, Wells)
Dickson, Charles Scott (Glasgow Bridgton)
Dickson-Poynder, Sir J., Bt. (Wilts, Chippenham)
Digby, John Kenelm Wingfield- (Dorset, North)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir C. W., Bt. (Gloucester, Forest of Dean)
Dillon, John (Mayo, East)
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph C. (London)
Disraeli, Coningsby R. (Cheshire, Altrincham)
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. D., Bt. (Middlesex, Uxbridge)
Donelan, Captain A. J. C. (Cork, East)
Doogan, P. C. (Tyrone, East)
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir John E., Bt. (Gloucester, Tewkesbury)
Doughty, George (Great Grimsby)
Douglas, Rt. Hon. Aretas Akers (Kent, St. Augustine's)
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark, North-West)
Doxford, Sir William T. (Sunderland)
Duffy, William J. (Galway, South)
Duke, H. E. (Plymouth)
Duncan, James H. (Yorks, W.R., Otley)
Dunn, Sir William, Bt. (Paisley)
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin, Bt. (Cornwall, Truro)
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H., Bt. (Kent Dartford)

E

Edwards, Francis (Radnor)
Egerton, Hon. Alan de Tatton (Cheshire Knutsford)
Elibank, Master of (Edinburgh, Midlothian)
Elliot, Hon. Arthur R. D. (Durham)
Ellis, John Edward (Nottingham, Rushcliffe)
Emmott, Alfred (Oldham)

Esmonde, Sir T. Grattan, Bt. (Wexford, North)
Evans, Sir Francis H. (Maidstone)
Evans, Samuel Thomas (Glamorgan, Mid)

F

Faber, E. Beckett (Hants, Andover)
Faber, G. Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George (Paddington, S.)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert (Aberdeenshire, West)
Farrell, James P. (Longford, North)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn E. (Hunts, Ramsey)
Fenwick, Charles (Northumberland, Wansbeck)
Ferguson, Ronald C. Munro (Leith Burghs)
Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J., Bt. (Manchester, N.E.)
Ffrench, Peter (Wexford, South)
Field, William (Dublin, St. Patrick)
Fielden, Edward B. (Lancashire, Middleton)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H. (Rutland)
Finlay, Sir Robert B. (Inverness Burghs)
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas (Hull, East)
Fisher, William Hayes (Fulham)
Fison, Frederick William (York, W.R., Doncaster)
FitzGerald, Sir Robert U. P., Bt. (Cambridge)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond G. Petty (Wilts, Cricklade)
Fitzroy, Hon. E. Algernon (Northants, South)
Flannery, Sir J. Fortescue (Yorkshire, Shipley)
Flavin, Michael Joseph (Kerry, North)
Flower, Ernest F. S. (Bradford, W.)
Flynn, James C. (Cork, North)
Forster, Henry W. (Kent, Sevenoaks)
Foster, Sir Michael (London University)
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon)
Foster, Sir B. Walter (Derby, Ilkeston)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir H. H. (Wolverhampton, East)
Fuller, J. M. F. (Wilts, Westbury)
Furness, Sir Christopher, Bt. (Hartlepool)

G

Galloway, William Johnson (Manchester, S.W.)
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, Wokingham)
Garfit, William (Boston)
Gibbs, Hon. Alban George H. (London)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (Herts, St. Albans)
Gilhooly, James (Cork Co., West)
Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herbert J. (Leeds, West)
Goddard, Daniel Ford (Ipswich)
Godson, Sir Augustus F. (Kidderminster)
Gordon, Hon. John Edwin (Elgin and Nairn)
Gordon, John (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Major W. E. (Tower Hamlets, Stepney)
Gore, Hon. C. R. C. Ormsby- (Shropshire, Oswestry)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby- (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon (Cambridge University)
Goschen, Hon. George J. (Sussex, East Grinstead)
Goulding, Edward A. (Wilts, Devizes)
Graham, Henry R. (St. Pancras, West)
Grant, Corrie (Warwickshire, Rugby)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham, North)
Green, Walford Davis (Wednesbury)
Greene, Sir E. Walter, Bt. (Bury St. Edmunds)
Greene, Henry David (Shrewsbury)
Greene, Walter Raymond (Cambs., Chesterton)
Grenfell, Major William H. (Bucks, Wycombe)
Gretton, John (Derbyshire, South)
Greville, Capt. Hon. Ronald H. F. (Bradford, East)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward, Bt. (Northumberland, Berwick)
Griffith, Ellis J. (Anglesey)
Groves, James G. (Salford, South)
Guest, Hon. Ivor C. (Plymouth)
Gunter, Col. Sir Robert, Bt. (York, W.R., Barkstone Ash)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton (Norfolk, North)
Guthrie, Walter Murray (Tower Hamlets, Bow, etc.)

H

Hain, Edward (Cornwall, St. Ives)

Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B. (Haddington)

Hall, E. Marshall (Lancashire, Southport)

Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F. (Herts, Watford)

Hambro, C. Eric (Surrey, Wimbledon)

Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George (Middlesex, Ealing)

Hamilton, Marquess of (Londonderry)

Hammond, John (Carlow)

Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert W. (Preston)

Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir W. G. Vernon (Monmouthshire, W.)

Hardie, James Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)

Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford)

Hare, Thomas L. (Norfolk, S.W.)

Harmsworth, R. Leicester (Caithness)

Harrington, Timothy (Dublin, Harbour)

Harris, Frederick L. (Tynemouth)

Harwood, George (Bolton)

Haslam, Sir Alfred Seale (Newcastle-under-Lyne)

Haslett, Sir James H. (Belfast, North)

Hatch, Ernest F. George (Lancashire, Gorton)

Hay, Hon. Claude G. D. (Shoreditch, Hoxton)

Hayden, John P. (Roscommon, South)

Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale- (Devon, Ashburton)

Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir A. D., Bt. (Walsall)

Healy, Timothy M. (Louth, North)

Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley)

Heath, James (Staffordshire, N.W.)

Heaton, J. Henniker (Canterbury)

Helder, Augustus (Whitehaven)

Helme, Norval W. (Lancashire, Lancaster)

Hemphill, Rt. Hon. C. Hare (Tyrone, North)

Henderson, Sir Alexander (Staffordshire, West)

Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T. (Oxon, Henley)

Hickman, Sir Alfred (Wolverhampton, West)

Hill, Capt. Arthur (Down, West)

Hoare, Sir Samuel, Bt. (Norwich)

Hobhouse, Charles E. H. (Bristol, East)

Hobhouse, Rt. Hon. Henry (Somerset, East)

Hogg, Lindsay (Sussex, Eastbourne)

Holland, Sir William H. (York, W.R., Rotherham)

Hope, J. Fitzalan (Sheffield, Brightside)

Hope, J. D. (Fife, West)

Hornby, Sir William Henry, Bt. (Blackburn)

Horner, Frederick W. (Lambeth, North)

Horniman, Frederick John (Penryn and Falmouth)

Houldsworth, Sir W. Henry, Bt. (Manchester, N.W.)

Hoult, Joseph (Cheshire, Wirral)

Houston, Robert P. (Liverpool, West Toxteth)

Howard, Capt. J. (Kent, Faversham)

Howard, Joseph (Middlesex, Tottenham)

Hozier, Hon. James H. C. (Lanark, South)

Hudson, George B. (Herts, Hitchin)

Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C. (Montgomery)

Hutton, Alfred E. (York, W.R., Morley)

Hutton, John (Yorkshire, Richmond)

J

Jacoby, James Alfred (Derbyshire, Mid)

Jameson, Major J. Eustace (Clare, West)

Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse (Cambridge University)

Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur F. (Hants, North)

Jessel, Captain Herbert M. (St. Pancras, South)

Johnstone, John Heywood (Sussex, Horsham)

Joicey, Sir James, Bt. (Durham, Chester-le-street)

Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea District)

Jones, William (Carnarvon, Arfon)

Jordan, Jeremiah (Fermanagh, South)

Joyce, M. (Limerick)

K

Kearley, Hudson E. (Devonport)

Kemp, George (Lancashire, Heywood)

Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H., Bt. (Devon, Honiton)

Kennedy, Patrick J. (Westmeath, North)

Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (Denbigh)

Kenyon-Slaney, Colonel Wm. (Shropshire, Newport)

Keswick, William (Surrey, Epsom)

Kimber, Henry (Wandsworth).

King, Sir H. Seymour (Hull, Central)

Kinloch, Sir John G. S., Bt. (Perthshire East)

Kitson, Sir James, Bt. (York, W.R., Colne Valley)

Knowles, Lees (Salford, West)

L

Labouchere, Henry (Northampton)

Lambert, George (Devon, South Molton)

Lambton, Hon. F. W. (Durham, South East)

Langley, Batty (Sheffield, Attercliffe)

Laurie, Lieut.-Gen. John W. (Pembroke and Haverfordwest)

Law, Andrew B. (Glasgow, Blackfriars)

Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, West)

Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monmouth Boroughs)

Lawrence, William F. (Liverpool, Abercromby)

Lawson, John Grant (York, N.R., Thirsk)

Layland-Barratt, F. (Devon, Torquay)

Leamy, Edmund (Kildare, North)

Lecky, Rt. Hon. William E. H. (Dublin University)

Lee, Lieut.-Col. A. H. (Hants, Fareham)

Lees, Sir Elliott, Bt. (Birkenhead)

Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Lancashire, Accrington)

Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage (St. George's, Hanover Square)

Leigh, Sir Joseph (Stockport)

Leigh-Bennett, Henry C. (Surrey, Chertsey)

Leng, Sir John (Dundee)

Leveson-Gower, F. S. (Sutherland)

Levy, M. (Leicestershire, Loughborough)

Lewis, John Herbert (Flint Boroughs)

Llewellyn, Evan Henry (Somerset, North)

Lloyd-George, David (Carnarvon, etc.)

Lockie, John (Devonport)

Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. Amelius (Essex, Epping)

Loder, Gerald W. E. (Brighton)

Logan, John William (Leicester, Harborough)

Long, Col. Charles W. (Worcestershire, Evesham)

Long, Rt. Hon. Walter H. (Bristol, South)

Lonsdale, John B. (Armagh, Mid.)

Lough, Thomas (Islington, W.)

Lowe, Francis W. (Birmingham, Edgbaston)

Lowther, Claude N. W. (Cumberland, Eskdale)

Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent, Thanet)

Lowther, Rt. Hon. James William (Cumberland, Penrith)

Loyd, Archie Kirkman (Berks, Abingdon)

Lucas, Col. Francis A. (Suffolk, Lowestoft)

Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)

Lundon, W. (Limerick, East)

Lynch, Arthur (Galway)

Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred (Warwick and Leamington)

M

Macdona, J. Cumming (Southwark, Rotherhithe)

MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A. (Queen's County, Leix)

MacIver, David (Liverpool, Kirkdale)

Macnamara, Thomas J. (Camberwell, North)

MacNeill, J. G. Swift (Donegal, South)

Maconochie, A. W. (Aberdeenshire, East)

MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, South)

McArthur, Charles (Liverpool, Exchange)

McArthur, William A. (Cornwall, St. Austell)

McCalmont, Colonel James (Antrim, East)

McCann, J. (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green)

McCrae, George (Edinburgh, East)

McFadden, Edward (Donegal, East)

McGovern, T. (Cavan, West)

M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim, North)

McIver, Sir Lewis, Bt. (Edinburgh, West)

M'Kean, John (Monaghan, South)

McKenna, Reginald (Monmouth, North)

M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)

McKillop, W. (Sligo, North)

McLaren, Sir C. B. Bright (Leicester, Bosworth)

Majendie, James H. A. (Portsmouth)
Malcolm, Ian Z. (Suffolk, Stowmarket)
Manners, Lord Cecil R. J. (Leicestershire, Melton)
Mansfield, H. (Lincoln, Spalding)
Maple, Sir J. Blundell, Bt. (Camberwell, Peckham)
Mappin, Sir Frederick T., Bt. (York, W.R., Hallamshire)
Markham, A. B. (Notts., Mansfield)
Martin, Richard Biddulph (Worcester, Droitwich)
Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W. F. B. (Finsbury, Central)
Mather, Sir William (Lancashire, Rossendale)
Maxwell, Rt. Hon. Sir Herbert E., Bt. (Wigton)
Maxwell, William Jardine (Dumfriesshire)
Mellor, Rt. Hon. John W. (York, W.R., Sowerby)
Melville, Beresford Valentine (Stockport)
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H., Bt. (Stafford, Handsworth)
Middlemore, John T. (Birmingham, North)
Mildmay, Francis B. (Devon, Totnes)
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Fred. G., Bt. (Notts., Bassetlaw)
Milvain, Thomas (Hampstead)
Minch, Matthew J. (Kildare, South)
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis W., Bt. (Cornwall, Bodmin)
Montagu, George C. (Hunts., Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon. John Scott- (Hants., New Forest)
Moon, Edward Robert P. (St. Pancras, North)
Mooney, John J. (Dublin Co., South)
Moore, William (Antrim, North)
More, Robert Jasper (Shropshire Ludlow)
Morgan, David John (Essex, Walthamstow)
Morgan, Col. Hon. Fred. C. (Monmouthshire, South)
Morgan, John Lloyd (Carmarthenshire, West)
Morley, Charles (Brecknock)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John (Montrose, etc.)
Morrell, George Herbert (Oxon., Woodstock)
Morrison, Lieut. James A. (Wiltshire, Wilton)
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Moss, Samuel (Denbighshire, East)
Moulton, John Fletcher (Cornwall, Launceston)
Mount, William A. (Berks., Newbury)
Mowbray, Sir Robert G. C., Bt. (Lambeth, Brixton)
Muntz, Sir Philip Albert (Warwickshire, Tamworth)
Murnaghan, George (Tyrone, Mid.)
Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Murray, Rt. Hon. Andrew Graham (Buteshire)
Murray, Charles James (Coventry)
Murray, Colonel C. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry (Winchester)

N

Nannetti, Joseph P. (Dublin, College Green)
Newdigate, Francis Alex. (Warwickshire, Nuneaton)
Newnes, Sir George, Bt. (Swansea Town)
Nicholson, William G. (Hants., Petersfield)
Nicol, Donald N. (Argyllshire)
Nolan, Col. J. P. (Galway, North)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry (Wolverhampton, S.)
Norton, Captain Cecil W. (Newington, West)
Nussey, Thomas Willans (Pontefract)

O

O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, North)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, West)
O'Connor, Thomas P. (Liverpool, Scotland)
O'Doherty, William (Donegal, North)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, South)
O'Donnell, Thomas (Kerry, West)
O'Dowd, John (Sligo, South)
O'Kelly, C. (Mayo, North)

O'Keily, James (Roscommon, North)

O'Malley, William (Galway, Connemara)

O'Mara, James (Kilkenny, South)

O'Neill, Hon. R. Torrens (Antrim, Mid.)

Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay (Ayr Burghs)

O'Shaughnessy, P. J. (Limerick, West)

O'Shee, James John (Waterford, West)

P

Palmer, Sir Charles M., Bt. (Durham, Jarrow)

Palmer, George William (Reading)

Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)

Parker, H. Gilbert G. (Gravesend)

Parkes, Ebenezer (Birmingham, Central)

Partington, O. (Derbyshire, High Peak)

Paulton, James M. (Durham, Bishop Auckland)

Pearson, Sir Weetman D., Bt. (Colchester)

Pease, Herbert P. (Darlington)

Pease, J. A. (Essex, Saffron Walden)

Pease, Sir Joseph W., Bt. (Durham, Barnard Castle)

Peel, Hon. William R. W. (Manchester, South)

Pemberton, John S. G. (Sunderland)

Penn, John (Lewisham)

Percy, Earl (Kensington, South)

Perks, Robert W. (Lincolnshire, South)

Philipps, John W. (Pembrokeshire)

Pickard, Benjamin (York, W.R., Normanton)

Pierpoint, Robert (Warrington)

Pilkington, Lieut.-Col. Richard (Lancashire, Newton)

Pirie, Duncan Vernon (Aberdeen, North)

Platt-Higgins, Frederick (Salford, North)

Plummer, Walter R. (Newcastle-on-Tyne)

Powell, Sir Francis Sharp, Bt. (Wigan)

Power, Patrick J. (Waterford, East)

Pretyman, Capt. Ernest George (Suffolk, Woodbridge)

Price, Robert John (Norfolk, East)

Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)

Pryce-Jones, Lieut.-Col. Edward (Montgomery Boroughs)

Purvis, Robert (Peterborough)

Pym, C. Guy (Bedford)

Q

Quilter, Sir W. Cuthbert, Bt. (Suffolk, Sudbury)

R

Randles, John S. (Cumberland, Cockermouth)

Rankin, Sir James, Bt. (Herefordshire, Leominster)

Rasch, Major Fred. C. (Essex, Chelmsford)

Ratcliff, R. F. (Staffordshire, Burton)

Rattigan, Sir William H. (Lanark, N.E.)

Rea, Russell (Gloucester)

Reckitt, Harold James (Lincolnshire, Brigg)

Reddy, M. (King's County, Birr)

Redmond, John E. (Waterford)

Redmond, William H. K. (Clare, East)

Reed, Sir Edward J. (Cardiff)

Reid, James (Greenock)

Reid, Sir Robert T. (Dumfries Burghs)

Remnant, James F. (Finsbury, Holborn)

Renshaw, Sir Charles B. (Renfrew, West)

Renwick, George (Newcastle-on-Tyne)

Richards, Henry Charles (Finsbury, East)

Rickett, J. Compton (Scarborough)

Ridley, Hon. M. White (Stalybridge)

Ridley, Samuel F. (Bethnal Green, South-West)

Rigg, Richard (Westmoreland, Appleby)

Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Charles T. (Croydon)

Roberts, John Bryn (Carnarvonshire, Eifion)

Roberts, John Herbert (Denbighshire, West)

Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield, Ecclesall)

Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)

Robertson, T. Herbert (Hackney, South)

Robinson, Brooke (Dudley)

Robson, William Snowdon (South Shields)

Roche, John (Galway, East)

Roe, Sir Thomas (Derby)

Rolleston, Sir John F. L. (Leicester)

Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye (Islington, South)

Ropner, Colonel Sir E. H. O. Robert (Stockton)

Rose, Charles Day (Cambridge, Newmarket)

Rothschild, Hon. Lionel W. (Bucks, Aylesbury)

Round, Rt. Hon. James (Essex, Harwich)

Royds, Col. Clement M. (Rochdale)

Runciman, Walter (Dewsbury)

Russell, Thomas W. (Tyrone, South)

Rutherford, John (Lancashire, Darwen)

Rutherford, William W. (Liverpool, West Derby)

S

Sackville, Colonel S. G. Stopford (Northants, North)

Sadler, Colonel Samuel A. (Middlesbrough)

Samuel, Harry S. (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse)

Samuel, Herbert Louis (Yorkshire, Cleveland)

Samuel, Stuart M. (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel)

Sandys, Col. Thomas M. (Lancashire, Bootle)

Sassoon, Sir Edward A., Bt. (Hythe)

Saunderson, Colonel Rt. Hon. E. J. (Armagh, North)

Schwann, Charles E. (Manchester, North)

Scott, Charles Prestwich (Lancashire, Leigh)

Scott, Sir Samuel E., Bt. (Marylebone, West)

Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)

Seely, Major John E. B. (Isle of Wight)

Seton-Karr, Sir Henry (St. Helens)

Shackleton, David James (Lancashire, Clitheroe)

Sharpe, W. E. Thompson (Kensington North)

Shaw, T. F. Charles Edward (Stafford)

Shaw, Thomas (Hawick Burghs)

Shaw-Stewart, M. Hugh (Renfrew, East)

Sheehan, Daniel D. (Cork Co., Mid.)

Shipman, Dr. John G. (Northampton)

Simeon, Sir J. S. Barrington, Bt. (Southampton)

Sinclair, Captain John (Forfar)

Sinclair, Louis (Essex, Romford)

Skewes-Cox, Thomas (Surrey, Kingston)

Sloan, Thomas Henry (Belfast, South)

Smith, Abel Henry (Herts, Hertford)

Smith, Hugh C. (Northumberland, Tyneside)

Smith, James Parker (Lanark, Partick)

Smith, Samuel (Flintshire)

Smith, Hon. W. Fred. D. (Strand, Westminster)

Soames, Arthur W. (Norfolk, South)

Soares, Ernest J. (Devon, Barnstaple)

Spear, John W. (Devon, Tavistock)

Spencer, Rt. Hon. Charles R. (Northants, Mid)

Spencer, Sir Ernest (West Bromwich)

Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Lancashire, Ormskirk)

Stanley, Edward (Somerset, Bridgwater)

Stanley, Lord (Lancashire, Westhoughton)

Stevenson, Francis S. (Suffolk, E.)

Stewart, Sir Mark J. McTaggart, Bt. (Kirkcudbright)

Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M., Bt. (Glasgow, College)

Stock, James Henry (Liverpool, Walton)

Stone, Sir John Benjamin (Birmingham, East)

Strachey, Sir Edward (Somerset, South)

Stroyan, John (Perthshire, West)

Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley (Essex, Maldon)

Sturt, Hon. Humphrey N. (Dorset, East)

Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath, South)

T

Talbot, Lord Edmund (Sussex, Chichester)

Talbot, Rt. Hon. John G. (Oxford University)

Taylor, Austin (Liverpool, East Toxteth)

Taylor, Theodore C. (Lancashire, Radcliffe)

Tennant, Harold John (Berwickshire)

Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)

Thomas, Sir Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)

Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr Tydvil)

Thomas, Captain F. Freeman- (Hastings)

Thomas, J. A. (Glamorgan, Gower)

Thompson, Dr. E. C. (Monaghan, N.)

Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R., Skipton)

Thorburn, Sir Walter (Peebles and Selkirk)

Thornton, Percy M. (Clapham)

Tollemache, Henry J. (Cheshire, Eddisbury)

Tomkinson, James (Cheshire, Crewe)

Tomlinson, Sir William E. M. (Preston)

Toulmin, George (Bury, Lancashire)

Trevelyan, Charles P. (York, W.R., Elland

Tritton, Charles E. (Lambeth, Norwood)

Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward (Essex, South-East)

Tuke, Sir John Batty (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities)

Tully, Jasper (Leitrim, South)

U

Ure, Alexander (Linlithgowshire)

V

Valentia, Viscount (Oxford)

Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard (Sheffield, Central)

Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)

W

Walker, Col. William H. (Widnes)

Wallace, Robert (Perth)

Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H., Bt. (Devon, Tiverton)

Walton, John Lawson (Leeds, South)

Walton, Joseph (York, W.R. Barnsley)

Wanklyn, J. Leslie (Bradford, Central)

Warde, Colonel Charles E. (Kent, Medway)

Warner, T. Courtenay T. (Stafford, Lichfield)

Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan and Kinross)

Wason, John C. (Orkney and Shetland)

Webb, Colonel William G. (Staffordshire, Kingswinford)

Weir, James Galloway (Ross and Cromarty)

Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. Earle (Taunton)

Welby, Sir Charles G. E., Bt. (Notts, Newark)

Wentworth, Capt. B. C. Vernon- (Brighton)

Wharton, Rt. Hon. J. Lloyd (York, W.R., Ripon)

White, George (Norfolk, North-West)

White, L. (York, E.R., Buckrose)

White, Patrick (Meath, North)

Whiteley, George (York, W.R., Pudsey)

Whiteley, Herbert (Ashton-under-Lyne)

Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)

Whitmore, Charles A. (Chelsea)

Whittaker, Thomas P. (York, W.R., Spen Valley)

Williams, Rt. Hon. Joseph Powell- (Birmingham, South)

Williams, Arthur O. (Merionethshire)

Williams, Colonel Robert (Dorset, West)

Willoughby de Eresby, Lord (Lincolnshire, Horncastle)

Willox, Sir John Archibald (Liverpool, Everton)

Wills, Sir Frederick (Bristol, North)

Wilson, Arthur S. (York, E.R., Holderness)

Wilson, Charles H. (Hull, West)

Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk, Mid)

Wilson, Henry Joseph (York, W.R., Holmfirth)

Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)

Wilson, John (Falkirk Burghs)

Wilson, J. (Glasgow, St. Rollox)

Wilson, John William (Worcestershire, North)

Wilson-Todd, William H. (York, E.R., Howdenshire)

Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. Edmond R. (Bath)

Wolff, Gustavus Wilhelm (Belfast, East)

Wood, James (Down, East)

Woodhouse, Sir James T. (Huddersfield)

Worsley-Taylor, H. W. (Lancashire, Blackpool)

Wortley, Rt. Hon. Charles B. Stuart- (Sheffield, Hallam)

Wrightson, Sir Thomas, Bt. (St. Pancras, East)

Wylie, Alexander (Dumbartonshire)

Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George (Dover)

Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H. (Glamorgan, South)

Y

Yerburgh, Robert A. (Chester)

Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)

Younger, William (Lincolnshire, Stamford)

Yoxall, James Henry (Nottingham, West)

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF CONSTITUENCIES,

WITH

NAMES OF MEMBERS

(Compiled at the opening of the Session.)

ENGLAND—COUNTIES (234 Members).

BEDFORDSHIRE (2)

North, or Biggleswade	Compton, Lord Alwyne F.
South, or Luton	Ashton, T. Gair.

BERKSHIRE (3)

East, or Wokingham	Gardner, Ernest.
North, or Abingdon	Loyd, A. K.
South, or Newbury	Mount, W. A.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE (3)

Mid, or Aylesbury	Rothschild, Hon. L. W.
North, or Buckingham	Carlile, W. W.
South, or Wycombe	Grenfell, Major W. H.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE (3)

East, or Newmarket	Rose, C. D.
North, or Wisbech	Brand, Hon. A. G.
West, or Chesterton	Greene, W. R.

CHESHIRE (8)

Altrincham	Disraeli, Coningsby R
Crewe	Tomkinson, J.
Eddisbury	Tollemache, H. J.
Hyde	Chapman, E.
Knutsford	Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton.
Macclesfield	Davenport, W. Bromley.
Northwich	Brunner, Sir J. T.
Wirral	Hoult, J.

CORNWALL (6)

Mid, or St. Austell	M'Arthur, W. A.
North-East, or Launceston	Moulton, J. F.
North-West, or Camborne	Caine, W. S.
South-East, or Bodmin	Molesworth, Sir L., Bt.
Truro	Durning-Lawrence, Sir E., Bt.
West, or St. Ives	Hain, E.

CUMBERLAND (4)

Cockermouth	Randles, J. S.
Mid, or Penrith	Lowther, Rt. Hon. J. W.
North, or Eskdale	Lowther, C. W. H.
West, or Egremont	Bain, J. R.

DERBYSHIRE (7)

Chesterfield	Bayley, Thomas.
High Peak	Partington, O.
Ilkeston	Foster, Sir B. W.
Mid	Jacoby, J. A.
North-East	Bolton, T. D.
South	Gretton, J.
West	Cavendish, Victor C. W.

DEVONSHIRE (8)

East, or Honiton	Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H., Bt.
Mid, or Ashburton	Hayne, Rt. Hon. C. Seale-
North-East, or Tiverton	Walrond, Col. Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
North, or South Molton	Lambert, G.
North-West, or Barnstaple	Soares, E. J.
South, or Totnes	Mildmay, F. Bingham.
Torquay	Barratt, F. L.
West, or Tavistock	Spear, J. W.

DORSETSHIRE (4)

East	Sturt, Hon. H. N.
North	Digby, J. K. W.
South	Brymer, W. E.
West	Williams, Col. R.

DURHAM (8)

Barnard Castle	Pease, Sir Joseph W., Bt.
Bishop Auckland	Paulton, J. M.
Chester-le-Street	Joicey, Sir James, Bt.
Houghton-le-Spring	Cameron, Robert.
Jarrow	Palmer, Sir C. Mark, Bt.
Mid	Wilson, John.
North-West	Atherley-Jones, L.
South-East	Lambton, Hon. F. W.

ESSEX (8)

East, or Maldon	Strutt, Hon. C. H.
Mid, or Chelmsford	Rasch, Major F. C.
North-East, or Harwich	Round, J.
North, or Saffron Walden	Pease, J. A.
South-East	Tufnell, Col. E.
South, or Romford	Sinclair, Louis.
South-West, or Walthamstow	Morgan, D. J.
West, or Epping	Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R. M.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE (5)

East, or Cirencester	Bathurst, Hon. A. B.
Forest of Dean	Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir C. W., Bt.
Mid, or Stroud	Allen, C. P.
North, or Tewkesbury	Dorington, Sir J. E., Bt.
South, or Thornbury	Colston, C. E. H. A.

HAMPSHIRE (5)

East, or Petersfield	Nicholson, W. G.
New Forest	Montagu, Hon. J. W. E. D. Scott-

Hampshire (5)—*cont.*	
North, or Basingstoke	Jeffreys, A. F.
South, or Fareham	Lee, Lt.-Col. A. H.
West, or Andover	Faber, E. B.
Herefordshire (2)	
North, or Leominster	Rankin, Sir Jas., Bart.
South, or Ross	Clive, Capt. P. A.
Hertfordshire (4)	
East, or Hertford	Smith, A. H.
Mid, or St. Albans	Gibbs, Hon. Vicary.
North, or Hitchin	Hudson, G. B.
West, or Watford	Halsey, T. F.
Huntingdonshire (2)	
North, or Ramsey	Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn E.
South, or Huntingdon	Montagu, G. C.
Isle of Wight (1)	Seely, Capt. J. E. B.
Kent (8)	
East, or St. Augustine's	Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers.
Isle of Thanet	Lowther, Rt. Hon. James.
Mid, or Medway	Warde, Lt.-Col. C. E.
North-East, or Faversham	Howard, Capt. J.
North-West, or Dartford	Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir W. Hart, Bt.
South, or Ashford	Hardy, Laurence.
South-West, or Tunbridge	Boscawen, A. Griffith.
West, or Sevenoaks	Forster, H. W.
Lancashire, North (4)	
Blackpool	Worsley-Taylor, H. W.
Chorley	Balcarres, Lord.
Lancaster	Helme, N. W.
North Lonsdale	Cavendish, Richd. F.
Lancashire, North-East (4)	
Accrington	Leese, Sir J. F.
Clitheroe	Shackleton, D. J.
Darwen	Rutherford, John.
Rossendale	Mather, Sir W.
Lancashire, South-East (8)	
Eccles	Clare, O. L.
Gorton	Hatch, E. F. G.
Heywood	Kemp, G.
Middleton	Fielden, E. B.
Prestwich	Cawley, F.
Radcliffe-cum-Farnworth	Taylor, T. C.
Stretford	Cripps, C. A.
Westhoughton	Stanley, Lord.
Lancashire, South-West (7)	
Bootle	Sandys, Col. T. M.
Ince	Blundell, Col. H. B. Hollinshed.
Leigh	Scott, C. P.
Newton	Pilkington, Lt.-Col. R.
Ormskirk	Stanley, Hon. Arthur.
Southport	Hall, E. Marshall.
Widnes	Walker, Col. W. H.

LEICESTERSHIRE (4)	
East, or Melton	Manners, Lord C. R. J.
Mid, or Loughborough	Levy, M.
South, or Harborough	Logan, J. W.
West, or Bosworth	M‘Laren, C. B. B.
LINCOLNSHIRE (7)	
East Lindsey, or Louth	Perks, R. W.
Holland, or Spalding	Mansfield, H. R.
North Kesteven, or Sleaford	Chaplin, Rt. Hon. H
North Lindsey, or Brigg	Reckitt, H. J.
South Kesteven, or Stamford	Younger, W.
South Lindsey, or Horncastle	Willoughby de Eresby, Lord.
West Lindsey, or Gainsborough	Ormsby-Gore, Hon. S. F.
MIDDLESEX (7)	
Brentford	Bigwood, J.
Ealing	Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George.
Enfield	Bowles, Lt. Col. H. F.
Harrow	Cox, J. E. Bainbridge.
Hornsey	Balfour, Capt. C. B.
Tottenham	Howard, J.
Uxbridge	Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. D., Bt.
MONMOUTHSHIRE (3)	
North	M‘Kenna, R.
South	Morgan, Col. Hon. F. C.
West	Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir W. Vernon.
NORFOLK (6)	
East	Price, R. J.
Mid	Wilson, F. W.
North	Gurdon, Sir W. B.
North-West	White, G.
South	Soames, A. W.
South-West	Hare, T. L.
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE (4)	
East	Channing, F. A.
Mid	Spencer, Hon. C. R
North	Sackville, S. G. S.
South	Fitzroy, Hon. J. G.
NORTHUMBERLAND (4)	
Berwick-upon-Tweed	Grey, Sir Edward, Bt.
Hexham	Beaumont, Wentworth C B
Tyneside	Smith, H. C.
Wansbeck	Fenwick, C.
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE (4)	
Bassetlaw	Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir F. G., Bt.
Mansfield	Markham, A. B.
Newark	Welby, Sir C. G. E., Bt.
Rushcliffe	Ellis, J. E.
OXFORDSHIRE (3)	
Mid, or Woodstock	Morrell, G. H.
North, or Banbury	Brassey, Albert.
South, or Henley	Hermon-Hodge, Sir R. T., Bt.
RUTLAND (1)	Finch, Rt. Hon. G. H.

SHROPSHIRE (4)	
Mid, or Wellington	Brown, Sir Alexander, Bt.
North, or Newport	Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.
South, or Ludlow	More, R. J.
West, or Oswestry	Gore, Hon. G. R. C. Ormsby.
SOMERSETSHIRE (7)	
Bridgwater	Stanley, E. J.
East	Hobhouse, Henry.
Frome	Barlow, J. E.
North	Llewellyn, Evan H.
South	Strachey, Sir Edward.
Wells	Dickinson, R. E.
West, or Wellington	Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
STAFFORDSHIRE (7)	
Burton	Ratcliffe, R. F.
Handsworth	Meysey-Thompson, Sir H., Bt.
Kingswinford	Webb, Col. W. G.
Leek	Bill, Charles.
Lichfield	Warner, T. Courtenay T.
North-West	Heath, James.
West	Henderson, Sir Alexander, Bt.
SUFFOLK (5)	
North-East, or Eye	Stevenson, F. S.
North, or Lowestoft	Lucas, Col. F. A.
North-West, or Stowmarket	Malcolm, Ian.
South-East, or Woodbridge	Pretyman, Capt. E. G.
South, or Sudbury	Quilter, Sir Cuthbert, Bt.
SURREY (6)	
Kingston	Skewes-Cox, T.
Mid, or Epsom	Keswick, W.
North-East, or Wimbledon	Hambro, C. E.
North-West, or Chertsey	Leigh-Bennett, H. C.
South-East, or Reigate	Cubitt, Hon. Henry.
South-West, or Guildford	Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John.
SUSSEX (6)	
East, or Rye	Brookfield, A. M.
Mid, or Lewes	Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir Hy., Bt.
North, or East Grinstead	Goschen, G. J., jun.
North-West, or Horsham	Johnstone, J. H.
South, or Eastbourne	Hogg, L.
South-West, or Chichester	Talbot, Lord Edmund.
WARWICKSHIRE (4)	
North-East, or Nuneaton	Newdigate, F. A.
North, or Tamworth	Muntz, Sir Philip, Bt.
South-East, or Rugby	Grant, Corrie.
South-West, or Stratford-on-Avon	Foster, P. S.
WESTMORELAND (2)	
North, or Appleby	Rigg, R.
South, or Kendal	Bagot, Capt. J. F.
WILTSHIRE (5)	
East, or Devizes	Goulding, E. A.
North, or Cricklade	Fitzmaurice, Lord E. G. Petty.
North-West, or Chippenham	Dickson-Poynder, Sir J. P., Bt.
South, or Wilton	Morrison, Lt. J. A.
West or Westbury	Fuller, J. M. F.

Worcestershire (5)

East	Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. Austen.
Mid, or Droitwich	Martin, R. Biddulph.
North	Wilson, J. W.
South, or Evesham	Long, Col. C. Wigram.
West, or Bewdley	Baldwin, Alfred.

Yorkshire, East Riding (3)

Buckrose	White, L.
Holderness	Wilson, A. S.
Howdenshire	Wilson-Todd, W. H.

Yorkshire, North Riding (4)

Cleveland	Samuel, H. L.
Richmond	Hutton, John.
Thirsk and Malton	Lawson, J. Grant.
Whitby	Beckett, E. W.

Yorkshire, West Riding (N.) (5)

Elland	Trevelyan, C. P.
Keighley	Brigg, John.
Shipley	Flannery, Sir J. Fortescue
Skipton	Thomson, F. W.
Sowerby	Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W.

Yorkshire, West Riding (S.) (8)

Barnsley	Walton, Joseph.
Colne Valley	Kitson, Sir J. B., Bt.
Doncaster	Fison, F. W.
Hallamshire	Mappin, Sir F. T., Bt.
Holmfirth	Wilson, H. J.
Morley	Hutton, A. E.
Normanton	Pickard, B.
Rotherham	Holland, Sir H. W.

Yorkshire, West Riding (E.) (6)

Barkston Ash	Gunter, Col. Sir Robert, Bt.
Osgoldcross	Austin, Sir John, Bt.
Otley	Duncan, J. H.
Pudsey	Whiteley, G.
Ripon	Wharton, Rt. Hon. J. Lloyd.
Spen Valley	Whittaker, T. P.

ENGLAND—METROPOLITAN BOROUGHS (62 Members).

Battersea and Clapham (2)

Battersea	Burns, John.
Clapham	Thornton, Percy M.

Bethnal Green (2)

North-East	Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
South-West	Ridley, S. F.

Camberwell (3)

Dulwich	Maple, Sir J. Blundell, Bt.
North	Macnamara, T. J.
Peckham	Banbury, Sir Frederick, Bt.

Chelsea (1)	Whitmore, C. A.

Croydon (1)	Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. T.
Deptford (1)	Morton, A. H. A.
Finsbury (3)	
Central	Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W. F. B.
East	Richards, H. C.
Holborn	Remnant, J. R.
Fulham (1)	Fisher, W. Hayes.
Greenwich (1)	Cecil, Lord Hugh R. H.
Hackney (3)	
Central	Allhusen, A. H. E.
North	Bousfield, W. R.
South	Robertson, T. H.
Hammersmith (1)	Bull, W. J.
Hampstead (1)	Milvain, Thomas.
Islington (4)	
East	Cohen, B. L.
North	Bartley, Sir George.
South	Rollit, Sir A. K.
West	Lough, Thomas.
Kensington (2)	
North	Sharpe, W. E. T.
South	Percy, Earl.
Lambeth (4)	
Brixton	Mowbray, Sir R. G., Bt.
Kennington	Cook, F. L.
North	Horner, F. W.
Norwood	Tritton, C. E.
Lewisham (1)	Penn, John.
London, City (2)	Dimsdale, Sir J. C. Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Marylebone (2)	
East	Boulnois, Edmund.
West	Scott, Sir S. E., Bt.
Newington (2)	
Walworth	Bailey, Jas.
West	Norton, Capt. C. W.
Paddington (2)	
North	Aird, Sir John.
South	Fardell, Sir T. G.
St. George's, Hanover Square (1)	Legge, Col. Hon. H.
St. Pancras (4)	
East	Wrightson, Sir Thos., Bt.
North	Moon, E. R. P.
South	Jessel, Capt. H. M.
West	Graham, H. R.
Shoreditch (2)	
Haggerston	Cremer, W. R.
Hoxton	Hay, Hon. C. G. D.

SOUTHWARK (3)	
Bermondsey	Cust, H. J. C.
Rotherhithe	Macdona, J. Cumming.
West	Causton, R. K.
STRAND (1)	Smith, Hon. W. F. D.
TOWER HAMLETS (7)	
Bow and Bromley	Guthrie, W. M.
Limehouse	Samuel, Harry S.
Mile End	Charrington, Spencer.
Poplar	Buxton, Sydney C.
St. George's	Dewar, Sir Thomas.
Stepney	Gordon, Major W. E. E.
Whitechapel	Samuel, S. M.
WANDSWORTH (1)	Kimber, Hy.
WEST HAM (2)	
North	Gray, Ernest.
South	Banes, Major G. E.
WESTMINSTER (1)	Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ashmead B.
WOOLWICH (1)	Beresford, Lord Charles.

ENGLAND—PROVINCIAL CITIES AND BOROUGHS (164 Members).

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE (1)	Whiteley, H. J.
ASTON MANOR (1)	Cecil, E.
BARROW-IN-FURNESS (1)	Cayzer, Sir C. W.
BATH, CITY (2)	Murray, Col. C. Wyndham. Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R.
BEDFORD (1)	Pym, C. Guy.
BIRKENHEAD (1)	Lees, Sir Elliott, Bt.
BIRMINGHAM, CITY (7)	
Bordesley	Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse.
Central	Parkes, Ebenezer.
East	Stone, Sir J. Benjamin.
Edgbaston	Lowe, F. W.
North	Middlemore, J. T.
South	Williams, J. Powell-
West	Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. Joseph.
BLACKBURN (2)	Hornby, Sir W. H., Bt. Coddington, Sir W., Bt.
BOLTON (2)	Cross, H. S. Harwood, G.
BOSTON (1)	Garfit, W.
BRADFORD, CITY (3)	
Central	Wanklyn, J. L.
East	Greville, Capt. Hon. R. H. Fulke.
West	Flower, Ernest S. F.
BRIGHTON (2)	Loder, Gerald W. E. Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-

Bristol, City (4)	
East	Hobhouse, C. E. H.
North	Wills, Sir F.
South	Long, Rt. Hon. W. H.
West	Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H., Bt.
Burnley (1)	Mitchell, W.
Bury (1)	Toulmin, G.
Bury St. Edmunds (1)	Greene, Sir E. W., Bt.
Cambridge (1)	FitzGerald, Sir R. Penrose-, Bt.
Canterbury, City (1)	Heaton, J. Henniker.
Carlisle, City (1)	Gully, Rt. Hon. W. C. (Speaker)
Chatham (1)	Davies, Sir Horatio D.
Cheltenham (1)	Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Chester, City (1)	Yerburgh, R. A.
Christchurch (1)	Balfour, Major K. R.
Colchester (1)	Pearson, Sir Weetman D., Bt.
Coventry (1)	Murray, C. J.
Darlington (1)	Pease, Herbt. P.
Derby (2)	Roe, Sir T. Bell, R.
Devonport (2)	Kearley, H. E. Lockie, J.
Dewsbury (1)	Runciman, W.
Dover (1)	Wyndham, George.
Dudley (1)	Robinson, Brooke.
Durham, City (1)	Elliot, Hon. Arthur R. D.
Exeter, City (1)	Vincent, Sir E.
Gateshead (1)	Allan, Sir William.
Gloucester, City (1)	Rea, R.
Grantham (1)	Priestley, A.
Gravesend (1)	Parker, Sir Gilbert
Grimsby, Great (1)	Doughty, G.
Halifax (2)	Crossley, Sir S. B. Whiteley, J. H.
Hanley (1)	Heath, A. H.
Hartlepool (1)	Furness, Sir C.
Hastings (1)	Thomas, Capt. F. F.
Hereford, City (1)	Arkwright, J. S.
Huddersfield (1)	Woodhouse, Sir J. T.

Hull, City (3)	
Central	King, Sir H. Seymour.
East	Firbank, Sir Joseph.
West	Wilson, C. H.
Hythe (1)	Sassoon, Sir Edward A., Bt.
Ipswich (2)	Goddard, D. F. Dalrymple, Sir Chas., Bt.
Kidderminster (1)	Godson, Sir Augustus F.
Leeds, City (5)	
Central	Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W.
East	Cautley, H. S.
North	Barran, R. H.
South	Walton, John Lawson
West	Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herbert J.
Leicester (2)	Broadhurst, Henry. Rolleston, Sir J. F. L
Lincoln, City (1)	Seely, C. H.
Liverpool, City (9)	
Abercromby	Lawrence, W. F.
East Toxteth	Taylor, Austin.
Everton	Willox, Sir J. A.
Exchange	M'Arthur, Charles.
Kirkdale	MacIver, David.
Scotland	O'Connor, T. P.
Walton	Stock, J. H.
West Derby	Rutherford, W. W.
West Toxteth	Houston, R. P.
Lynn Regis (1)	Bowles, T. Gibson.
Maidstone (1)	Evans, Sir F. H.
Manchester, City (6)	
East	Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J.
North	Schwann, C. E.
North-East	Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J., Bt.
North-West	Houldsworth, Sir W. H., Bt.
South	Peel, Hon. W. R. W.
South-West	Galloway, W. J.
Middlesbrough (1)	Sadler, Col. S. A.
Monmouth District (1)	Lawrence, Joseph.
Morpeth (1)	Burt, Thomas.
Newcastle-under-Lyme (1)	Haslam, Sir A. S.
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, City (2)	Plummer, W. R. Renwick, G.
Northampton (2)	Labouchere, Henry. Shipman, Dr. J. G.
Norwich, City (2)	Hoare, Sir Samuel, Bt. Bullard, Sir Harry.

Nottingham, City (3)	
East	Bond, Edward.
South	Bentinck, Lord H. C.
West	Yoxall, J. H.
Oldham (2)	Emmott, Alfred. Churchill, W. L. S.
Oxford, City (1)	Valentia, Viscount.
Penryn and Falmouth (1)	Horniman, F. J.
Plymouth (2)	Duke, H. E. Guest, Hon. I. C.
Pontefract (1)	Nussey, T. Willans.
Portsmouth (2)	Majendie, J. H. A. Lucas, R. J.
Preston (2)	Hanbury, Rt. Hon. R. W. Tomlinson, Sir William.
Reading (1)	Palmer, G. W.
Rochdale (1)	Royds, Col. C. M.
Rochester, City (1)	Cranborne, Viscount.
St. Helens (1)	Seton-Karr, Sir Henry.
Salford (3)	
North	Platt-Higgins, F.
South	Groves, J. G.
West	Knowles, Lees.
Salisbury, City (1)	Palmer, W.
Scarborough (1)	Rickett, J. Compton.
Sheffield, City (5)	
Attercliffe	Langley, Batty.
Brightside	Hope, J. Fitzalan.
Central	Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard.
Ecclesall	Roberts, S.
Hallam	Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-.
Shrewsbury (1)	Greene, H. D.
Southampton (2)	Simeon, Sir J. S. Barrington, Bt. Chamberlayne, T.
South Shields (1)	Robson, W. S.
Stafford (1)	Shaw, T. F. C. E.
Stalybridge (1)	Ridley, M. White.
Stockport (2)	Leigh, Sir Joseph. Melville, B. V.
Stockton (1)	Ropner, Col. E. H. O. R.
Stoke-upon-Trent (1)	Coghill, D. H.
Sunderland (2)	Doxford, Sir W. T. Pemberton, J. S. G.

Taunton (1)	Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E.
Tynemouth (1)	Harris, F. L.
Wakefield, City (1)	Brotherton, E. A.
Walsall (1)	Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir A. D., Bt.
Warrington (1)	Pierpoint, Robert.
Warwick and Leamington (1)	Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred.
Wednesbury (1)	Green, W. D.
West Bromwich (1)	Spencer, Sir Ernest.
Whitehaven (1)	Helder, Augustus.
Wigan (1)	Powell, Sir F. S., Bt.
Winchester, City (1)	Myers, W. H.
Windsor (1)	Barry, Sir F. T., Bt.
Wolverhampton (3)	
East	Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir H. H.
South	Norman, H.
West	Hickman, Sir Alfred
Worcester, City (1)	Allsopp, Hon. G. H.
Yarmouth, Great (1)	Colomb, Sir John C. R.
York, City (2)	Butcher, J. G. Faber, G. D.

WALES—COUNTIES (19 Members).

Anglesey (1)	Griffith, Ellis J.
Brecknockshire (1)	Morley, Charles.
Cardiganshire (1)	Davies, M. L. Vaughan.
Carmarthenshire (2)	
East	Thomas, Abel.
West	Morgan, J. Lloyd.
Carnarvonshire (2)	
North or Arfon	Jones, William.
South or Eifion	Roberts, J. Bryn
Denbighshire (2)	
East	Moss, Samuel.
West	Roberts, J. H.
Flintshire (1)	Smith, Samuel.
Glamorganshire (5)	
East	Thomas, Sir Alfred.
Mid	Evans, S. T.
Rhondda	Abraham, William.
South	Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
West, or Gower	Thomas, J. A.
Merionethshire (1)	Williams, A. O.

Montgomeryshire (1)	Humphreys-Owen, A. C.
Pembrokeshire (1)	Philipps, J. Wynford.
Radnorshire (1)	Edwards, F.

WALES—BOROUGHS (11 Members).

Cardiff District (1)	Reed, Sir E. J.
Carmarthen District (1)	Davies, Alfred.
Carnarvon District (1)	Lloyd-George, David.
Denbigh District (1)	Kenyon, Hon. G. T.
Flint District (1)	Lewis, J. H.
Merthyr Tydvil (2)	Thomas, D. A. Hardie, J. Keir.
Montgomery District (1)	Pryce-Jones, Lieut.-Col. E.
Pembroke and Haverfordwest District (1)	Laurie, Lieut.-Col. J. W.
Swansea (2)	
District	Jones, D. Brynmor.
Town	Newnes, Sir G.

SCOTLAND—COUNTIES (39 Members).

Aberdeenshire (2)	
East	Maconachie, A. W.
West	Farquharson, Dr. R.
Argyllshire (1)	Nicol, Donald N.
Ayrshire (2)	
North	Cochrane, Hon. T. H.
South	Arrol, Sir William.
Banffshire (1)	Black, A. W.
Berwickshire (1)	Tennant, H. J.
Buteshire (1)	Murray, Rt. Hon. A. Graham.
Caithness-shire (1)	Harmsworth, R. L.
Clackmannan and Kinross (1)	Wason, Eugene.
Dumbartonshire (1)	Wylie, Alexander.
Dumfriesshire (1)	Maxwell, W. J. H.
Edinburgh (Midlothian) (1)	Murray, Hon. A. W. C. O.
Elgin and Nairn (1)	Gordon, Hon. J. E.
Fifeshire (2)	
East	Asquith, Rt. Hon. H. H.
West	Hope, J. D.
Forfarshire (1)	Sinclair, Capt. J.

Haddingtonshire (1)	Haldane, R. B.
Inverness-shire (1)	Dewar, J. A.
Kincardineshire (1)	Crombie, J. W.
Kirkcudbrightshire (1)	Stewart, Sir Mark J. McT., Bt.
Lanarkshire (6)	
Govan	Craig, R. H.
Mid	Caldwell, J.
North-East	Rattigan, Sir W. H.
North-West	Douglas, C. M.
Partick	Smith, J. Parker.
South	Hozier, Hon. J. H. C.
Linlithgowshire (1)	Ure, Alex.
Orkney and Shetland (1)	Wason, J. C.
Peebles and Selkirk (1)	Thorburn, Sir Walter.
Perthshire (2)	
East	Kinloch, Sir J. G. S., Bt.
West	Stroyan, J.
Renfrewshire (2)	
East	Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
West	Renshaw, Sir Charles.
Ross and Cromarty (1)	Weir, J. G.
Roxburghshire (1)	Dalkeith, Earl of.
Stirlingshire (1)	McKillop, J.
Sutherlandshire (1)	Leveson-Gower, F. S.
Wigtonshire (1)	Maxwell, Rt. Hon. Sir H. E., Bt.

SCOTLAND—CITIES AND BURGHS (31 Members).

Aberdeen, City (2)	
North	Pirie, D. V.
South	Bryce, Rt. Hon. James.
Ayr District (1)	Orr-Ewing, C. L.
Dumfries District (1)	Reid, Sir R. T.
Dundee (2)	Robertson, Edmund. Leng, Sir John.
Edinburgh, City (4)	
Central	Brown, G. M.
East	McCrae, George.
South	Agnew, Sir A. N., Bt.
West	McIver, Sir Lewis, Bt.
Elgin District (1)	Asher, Alexander.
Falkirk District (1)	Wilson, John.

Glasgow, City (7)	
Blackfriars and Hutchesontown	Law, A. B.
Bridgeton	Dickson, C. Scott.
Camlachie	Cross, Alexander.
Central	Baird, J. G. A.
College	Stirling-Maxwell, Sir J. M., Bt.
St. Rollox	Wilson, John.
Tradeston	Corbett, A. Cameron.
Greenock (1)	Reid, James.
Hawick District (1)	Shaw, Thomas.
Inverness District (1)	Finlay, Sir R. B.
Kilmarnock District (1)	Denny, Col. J. McA.
Kirkcaldy District (1)	Dalziel, J. H.
Leith District (1)	Ferguson, R. C. Munro.
Montrose District (1)	Morley, Rt. Hon. J.
Paisley (1)	Dunn, Sir Wm., Bt.
Perth City (1)	Wallace, Robert.
St. Andrews District (1)	Anstruther, H. T.
Stirling District (1)	Campbell-Bannerman, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Wick District (1)	Bignold, Arthur.

IRELAND—COUNTIES (85 Members).

Antrim (4)	
East	McCalmont, Col. J.
Mid	O'Neill, Hon. R. T.
North	Moore, William.
South	Craig, C. C.
Armagh County (3)	
Mid	Lonsdale, J. B.
North	Saunderson, Col. Rt. Hon. E. J.
South	Campbell, J.
Carlow County (1)	Hammond, John.
Cavan (2)	
East	Young, Samuel.
West	McGovern, Thos.
Clare (2)	
East	Redmond, W. H. K.
West	Jameson, Major J. E.
Cork, County (7)	
East	Donelan, Captain A. J. C.
Mid	Sheehan, D. D.
North	Flynn, J. C.
North-East	Abraham, Wm.
South	Barry, Edward.
South-East	Crean, Eugene.
West	Gilhooly, J.

Donegal (4)	
East	McFadden, E.
North	O'Doherty, W.
South	MacNeill, J. G. Swift.
West	Law, Hugh A.
Down (4)	
East	Wood, James.
North	Corbett, T. L.
South	MacVeagh, J.
West	Hill, Captain Arthur.
Dublin, County (2)	
North	Clancy, J. J.
South	Mooney, J. J.
Fermanagh (2)	
North	Archdale, E. M.
South	Jordan, Jeremiah.
Galway, County (4)	
Connemara	O'Malley, William.
East	Roche, John.
North	Nolan, Col. J. P.
South	Duffy, W. J.
Kerry (4)	
East	Murphy, J.
North	Flavin, M. J.
South	Boland, J. P.
West	O'Donnell, Thos.
Kildare (2)	
North	Leamy, Edmund.
South	Minch, Matthew J.
Kilkenny County (2)	
North	Devlin, Joseph.
South	O'Mara, James.
King's County (2)	
Birr	Reddy, Michael.
Tullamore	Burke, E. H.
Leitrim (2)	
North	McHugh, Patrick A.
South	Tully, Jasper.
Limerick, County (2)	
East	Lundon, Wm.
West	O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Londonderry, County (2)	
North	Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John.
South	Gordon, J.
Longford, County (2)	
North	Farrell, J. P.
South	Blake, Edward.
Louth (2)	
North	Healy, T. M.
South	Nolan, Joseph.

Mayo (4)	
East	Dillon, John.
North	O'Kelly, Conor.
South	O'Donnell, John.
West	Ambrose, Robert.
Meath (2)	
North	White, Patrick.
South	Carew, J. L.
Monaghan (2)	
North	Thompson, Dr. E. C.
South	McKean, J.
Queen's County (2)	
Leix...	MacDonnell, Dr. M. A.
Ossory	Delany, William.
Roscommon (2)	
North	O'Kelly, Jas.
South	Hayden, J. P.
Sligo, County (2)	
North	McKillop, W.
South	O'Dowd, John.
Tipperary (4)	
East	Condon, T. J.
Mid...	O'Brien, K. E.
North	O'Brien, P. J.
South	Cullinan, John.
Tyrone (4)	
East	Doogan, P. C.
Mid...	Murnaghan, George.
North	Hemphill, Rt. Hon. C. H.
South	Russell, T. W.
Waterford, County (2)	
East	Power, P. J.
West	O'Shee, J. J.
Westmeath (2)	
North	Kennedy, P. J.
South	Sullivan, Donal.
Wexford (2)	
North	Esmonde, Sir T. H. G.
South	Ffrench, Peter.
Wicklow (2)	
East	Cogan, Denis J.
West	O'Connor, James.

IRELAND—CITIES AND BOROUGHS (16 Members).

Belfast, City (4)	
East	Wolff, G. W.
North	Haslett, Sir Jas. H.
South	Sloan, T. H.
West	Arnold-Forster, H. O.
Cork, City (2)...	O'Brien, J. F. X. O'Brien, William.

DUBLIN, CITY (4)	
College Green	Nannetti, J. P.
Dublin Harbour	Harrington, T.
St. Patrick's	Field, William.
St. Stephen's Green	McCann, James.
GALWAY, TOWN (1)	
KILKENNY (1)	O'Brien, Patrick.
LIMERICK, CITY (1)	Joyce, Michael.
LONDONDERRY, CITY (1)	Hamilton, Capt. the Marquess of.
NEWRY (1)	Carvill, P. G. H.
WATERFORD (1)	Redmond, J. E.

UNIVERSITIES (9 Members).

ENGLAND :—	
Cambridge University (2)	Jebb, Sir R. C. Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
London University (1)	Foster, Sir Michael.
Oxford University (2)	Anson, Sir W. R., Bart. Talbot, Rt. Hon. J. G.
SCOTLAND :—	
Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities (1)	Tuke, Sir J. Batty.
Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities (1)	Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. A.
IRELAND :—	
Dublin University (2)	Carson, Rt. Hon. E. H. Lecky, Rt. Hon. W. E. H.

SUMMARY.

	No. of Members	
ENGLAND		
Counties	234	
Metropolitan Boroughs	62	
Provincial Cities and Boroughs	164	
		460
WALES		
Counties	19	
Boroughs	11	
		30
SCOTLAND		
Counties	39	
Cities and Burghs	31	
		70
IRELAND		
Counties	85	
Cities and Boroughs	16	
		101
UNIVERSITIES		
England	5	
Scotland	2	
Ireland	2	
		9
Total number of Members		670

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II. No. 1 (1903). Correspondence respecting the rising of the Mullah Muhammed Abdullah in Somaliland, and consequent military operations. (January 27.) 35

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No. 2923. Germany (Trade of Wurtemberg for 1901 and part of 1902). (December 29.)
No. 2924. Spain (Trade of Bilbao for 1901). (January 2.)
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No. 2930. Finances of Italy for the year 1902.
No. 2931. Egypt (Trade of Alexandria for 1901, and 1st January to 31st May, 1902.)
No. 2932. (Trade of Crete for the year 1901.) (January 31.)
No. 2933. Foreign Trade of Italy for the year 1901. (February 6.)

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No. 2934. Shipping and Trade of Denmark for 1901 (Supplementary). (February 10.)
No. 2935. Italy (Trade of Venice). (February 11.) 35

II. Miscellaneous Series.
No. 587. Coal Industry of the United States. (January 16.)
No. 588. Africa (exotic plants of economic interest in the Botanic Gardens at Entebbe, Uganda). (January 23.) 35

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I. 1902—No. 17. Final Protocol between the Foreign Powers and China for the resumption of friendly relations; signed at Peking, 7th September, 1901 (with 19 annexes). (December 29.)
II. 1903—No. 1. Convention between the United Kingdom and Belgium regulating telephonic communication between the United Kingdom and Belgium; signed at Brussels, 21st November, 1902. (January 22.)
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CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887.—Proclamation, dated 2nd February, 1903, revoking the several proclamations mentioned in the schedule thereto 41

FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS.

I. (Sanitary Accommodation.) Order made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, dated 4th February, 1903, in pursuance of Section 9 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, determining what is sufficient and suitable accommodation in the way of sanitary conveniences, within the meaning of that section.

II. (Particulars of Piece Work Wages, Wholesale Tailoring.) Order made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, dated 5th January, 1903, applying with modifications, the provisions of Section 116 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, to factories and workshops in which wholesale tailoring is carried on, and to outworkers employed in wholesale tailoring, and the occupiers and contractors by whom they are employed 41

CHELSEA HOSPITAL (ARMY PRIZE MONEY AND LEGACY FUNDS, 1901–2).—Account of the receipts and expenditure of the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital (for services other than those voted by Parliament) in the year ended 31st March, 1902; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon 41

IMPERIAL OTTOMAN GUARANTEED LOAN.—Account for the year 1902... ... 41

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES AND SHOP CLUBS.—Regulation, dated 1st January, 1903, made by the Treasury under the Friendly Societies Act, 1896, with reference to friendly societies desirous of being certified under the Shop Clubs Act, 1902 41

DUCHY OF LANCASTER.—Account of the receipts and disbursements of the Duchy of Lancaster in the year ended 20th December, 1902, also a separate account of the capital of the said Duchy to same date 41

SUPERANNUATION.

I. Treasury Minute, dated 15th January, 1903, declaring that John Gledhill, Post Office, sub-office postman, was appointed without a civil service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department.

II. Treasury Minutes, dated 17th December, 1902, granting a retired allowance to Henry Bonn, assistant superintendent, 2nd class, Newcastle-on-Tyne Post Office; dated 22nd January, 1903, granting a retired allowance to Thomas Riley, principal foreman in charge of the metal foundries, rolling mills and quick-firing case factory, Royal Laboratory, Woolwich 42

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE MARKS ACTS, 1883–1902.—Patents Rules, 1903 42

MILITARY MANŒUVRES, 1903.—Order in Council relative to military manœuvres, 1903 42

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT.

I. The annual report on the state of the finances of the University of Edinburgh, under the provisions of Section 30 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889.

II. Annual statistical report to the Secretary for Scotland, under the provisions of Section 30 of the Universities (Scotland) Act for the year 1901–2, by the University Courts of the University of Glasgow; the University of Edinburgh; the University of Aberdeen... 42

LOCAL TAXATION RETURNS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1881.—Annual Local Taxation (Scotland) Returns for the year 1900–1901.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table ... 42

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 17TH FEBRUARY, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

Message to attend His Majesty.

The House went, and being returned—

WRITS ISSUED DURING RECESS.—MR. SPEAKER informed the House, That he had issued Warrants for New Writs during the Recess, for Liverpool (West Derby Division), in the room of Samuel Wasse Higginbottom, Esquire, deceased; County of Antrim (South Division), The Right Hon. William Grey Ellison Macartney, Deputy Master of the Mint 43

COLONEL LYNCH.—SENTENCE ON A MEMBER.—Mr. SPEAKER informed the House that he had received a letter relating to a sentence upon a Member 43

NEW WRITS.—New Writ for the County of Perth (Eastern Division), in the room of Sir John George Smyth Kinloch, Baronet (Manor of Northstead).—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)... 43

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.—Charles Day Rose, esquire, for County of Cambridge (Eastern or Newmarket Division); William Watson Rutherford, esquire, Liverpool (West Derby Division) 43

ELECTIONS.—Ordered, That all Members who are returned for two or more places in any part of the United Kingdom do make their election for which of the places they will serve, within one week after it shall appear that there is no question upon the return for that place; and if anything shall come in question touching the return or election of any Member, he is to withdraw during the time the matter is in debate; and that all Members returned upon double returns do withdraw till their returns are determined.

Resolved, That no Peer of the Realm, except such Peers of Ireland as shall for the time being be actually elected, and shall not have declined to serve, for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, hath any right to give his Vote in the election of any Member to serve in Parliament.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of the United Kingdom for any Lord of Parliament, or other Peer or Prelate, not being a Peer of Ireland at the time elected, and not having declined to serve for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, to concern himself in the election of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament, except only any Peer of Ireland, at such elections in Great Britain respectively where such Peer shall appear as a candidate, or by himself, or any others, be proposed to be elected; or for any Lord Lieutenant or Governor of any county to avail himself of any authority derived from his Commission, to influence the election of any Member to serve for the Commons in Parliament."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'Kingdom,' in line 2, to the word 'for' in line 8."—(*Mr. James Lowther.*)

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 270; Noes, 68. (Division List No. 1.)

Main Question put and agreed to.

Resolved, That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of the United Kingdom for any Lord of Parliament or other Peer or Prelate, not being a Peer of Ireland at the time elected, and not having declined to serve for any county, city or borough of Great Britain to concern himself in the election of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament, except only any Peer of Ireland, at such Elections in Great Britain respectively where such Peer shall appear as a candidate, or by himself, or any others, be proposed to be elected; or for any Lord Lieutenant or Governor of any county to avail himself of any authority derived from his Commission to influence the election of any Member to serve for the Commons in Parliament.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath been elected or returned a Member of this House, or endeavoured so to be by bribery, or any other corrupt practices, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against all such persons as shall have been wilfully concerned in such bribery or other corrupt practices.

WITNESSES.—Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath been tampering with any witness, in respect of his evidence to be given to this House, or any Committee thereof, or directly or indirectly hath endeavoured to deter or hinder any person from appearing or giving evidence, the same is declared to be a high crime or misdemeanour; and this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath given false evidence in any case before this House, or any Committee thereof, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender ... 49

METROPOLITAN POLICE.—Ordered, That the Commissioners of the Police of the Metropolis do take care that, during the Session of Parliament, the passages through the streets leading to this House be kept free and open, and that no obstruction be permitted to hinder the passage of Members to and from this House, and that no disorder be allowed in Westminster Hall, or in the passages leading to this House, during the Sitting of Parliament, and that there be no annoyance therein or thereabouts; and that the Serjeant at Arms attending this House do communicate this Order to the Commissioners aforesaid. 49

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS.—Ordered, That the Votes and Proceedings of this House be printed, being first perused by Mr. Speaker; and that he do appoint the printing thereof; and that no person but such as he shall appoint do presume to print the same 49

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PRIVILEGES.—Ordered, That a Committee of Privileges be appointed 49

Outlawries Bill.—"For the more effectual preventing Clandestine Outlawries," read the first time; to be read a second time 49

JOURNAL.—Ordered, That the Journal of this House, from the end of the last session to the end of the present session, with an Index thereto, be printed.

Ordered, That 500 Copies of the said Journal and Index be printed by the appointment and under the direction of Sir Courtenay Peregrine Ilbert, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., the Clerk of this House.

Ordered, That the said Journal and Index be printed by such person as shall be licensed by Mr. Speaker, and that no other person do presume to print the same 50

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).—The following Papers, presented by Royal Command during the Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of the 14th August, 1896:—

1. Mines (Explosion at the MacLaren Colliery, Abertysswg).—Copy of Reports to the Secretary of State for the Home Department by S. T. Evans, Esquire, K.C., M.P., and J. S. Martin, Esquire, one of His Majesty's Inspectors of Mines, on the circumstances attending an explosion which occurred at MacLaren Colliery (No. 1 Pit), Abertysswg, on the 3rd September, 1902;

2. Judicial Statistics (England and Wales).—Copy of Judicial Statistics, Part I., relating to Criminal Proceedings, Police, Coroners, Prisons, Reformatory and Industrial Schools, and Criminal Lunatics, for England and Wales for 1901;

3. County Courts (Plaints and Sittings). Copy of Return of Plaints and Sittings in County Courts for the year 1901;

4. Census of England and Wales, 1901.—Copy of Census of England and Wales, 1901 (Counties of Bedford, Buckingham, Carnarvon, Denbigh, Anglesey, Radnor, Rutland, Montgomery, Merioneth, Brecknock, Huntingdon, Flint, Salop, Pembroke, Westmoreland, Hereford, and Cardigan;

5. Workhouse Accounts (Departmental Committee).—Copy of Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the President of the Local Government Board to inquire into Workhouse Accounts, with Appendices;

6. Irish Land Commission (Proceedings).—Copy of Return of Proceedings during the months of November and December, 1902;

7. Agrarian Outrages (Ireland).)—Copy of Return for the quarter ended 31st December, 1902;

8. Evictions (Ireland).—Copy of Return of Evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st December, 1902;

9. Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Eviction Notices).—Copy of Return of Eviction Notices filed during the quarter ended 31st December, 1902;

10. Agricultural Statistics (Ireland).—Copy of Tables showing the extent in statute acres and the produce of the Crops for the year 1902, &c.;

11. National Education (Ireland).—Copy of Appendix to the Sixty-eighth Report of the Commissioners, being for the year 1901. Section II.;

12. East India (Trade).—Copy of Tables relating to the Trade of British India with British Possessions and Foreign Countries for the five years 1897–8 to 1901–2;

13. Trade Reports (Extracts).—Copy of Extracts from the Reports of His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad, received during the year 1902, relating to particular Trades and Industries (Coal);

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14. Railway Accidents.—Copy of Returns of Accidents and Casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several Railway Companies in the United Kingdom during the nine months ending 30th September, 1902, together with Reports of the Inspecting Officers, Assistant Inspecting Officers, and Sub-Inspectors of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain Accidents which were inquired into;

15. Certificates of Origin.—Copy of Memorandum showing the Regulations existing in the principal European Countries and in Canada, the United States, and Japan, in regard to Certificates of Origin;

16. Poisons (Departmental Committee).—Copy of Report, Supplementary Report, and Minority Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Lord President of the Council to consider Schedule A to the Pharmacy Act, 1868, to report the alterations therein which they deem expedient, and whether a third part should be added thereto, with Copy of the Minutes appointing the Committee, and a List of Witnesses examined. Part I.;

17. Poisons (Departmental Committee).—Copy of Minutes of Evidence taken by the Departmental Committee appointed by the Lord President of the Council to consider Schedule A to the Pharmacy Act, 1868, to report the alterations therein which they deem expedient, and whether a third part should be added thereto, together with Appendices and Index to Evidence. Part II.;

18. Glanders (Departmental Committee).—Copy of Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture for the purpose of conducting experimental investigations with regard to the communicability of the infection of Glanders under certain conditions, and as to the arresting and curative powers, if any, of mallein repeatedly administered;

19. Crofter and Cottar Colonisation Scheme.—Copy of Thirteenth Report of the Commissioners appointed to carry out a Scheme of Colonisation in the Dominion of Canada of Crofters and Cottars from the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland, with Appendices;

20. Northern Nigeria.—Copy of Correspondence relating to Kano;

21. Colonial Reports (Annual).—Copies of Reports Nos. 376 (Grenada, Annual Report for 1901), 377 (Northern Nigeria, Annual Report for 1901), 378 (British Guiana, Report for 1901–2), 379 (Mauritius, Annual Report for 1901), 380 (Basutoland Report for 1901–2);

22. Africa (No. 6, 1902).—Copy of Correspondence respecting Slavery and the Slave Trade in East Africa and the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba (in continuation of Africa, No. 4, 1901);

23. Treaty Series (No. 17, 1902).—Copy of Final Protocol between the Foreign Powers and China for the resumption of Friendly Relations. Signed at Peking, 7th September, 1901 (with 19 Annexes);

24. Treaty Series (No. 1, 1903).—Copy of Convention between the United Kingdom and Belgium regulating Telephonic Communications between the United Kingdom and Belgium. Signed at Brussels, 21st November, 1902;

25. Treaty Series (No. 2, 1903).—Copy of Convention between the United Kingdom and France for the Exchange of Insured and Uninsured Parcels between France and the British Colony of Gibraltar. Signed at Paris, 22nd October, 1902. Ratifications exchanged at Paris, 10th December, 1902;

26. United States (No. 1, 1903).—Copy of Convention signed at Washington, 24th January, 1903, for the Adjustment of the Boundary between the Dominion of Canada and the Territory of Alaska;

27. Africa (No. 1, 1903).—Copy of Correspondence respecting the Rising of the Mullah Muhammed Abdullah in Somaliland and consequent Military Operations, 1901–2 (in continuation of Africa, No. 3, 1902) ;

28. Nationality and Naturalisation (Miscellaneous, No. 1, 1903).—Copy of Despatch from His Majesty's Minister in Brazil, enclosing a translation of a Decree regulating Naturalisation of Aliens (in continuation of Miscellaneous, No. 3, 1893) ;

29. Venezuela (No. 1, 1903).—Copy of Correspondence respecting the affairs of Venezuela ;

30. Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2923 to 2935 ;

31. Trade Reports (Miscellaneous Series).—Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, Nos. 587 and 588 ;

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table 53

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SUGAR BOUNTIES (COUNTERVAILING DUTIES) (COMMERCIAL, NO. 1, 1903).—Copy presented, of Correspondence with the Russian Government respecting the Interpretation of the Most-Favoured-Nation Clause in connection with Countervailing Duties on Bounty-fed Sugar [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table.

CREMATION (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE).—Copy presented, of Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to prepare a Draft of the Regulations to be made under The Cremation Act, 1902 [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table 54

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (PARTICULARS OF PIECE WORK WAGES) (WHOLESALE TAILORING).—Copy presented, of Order, dated 5th January, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, applying with modifications the provisions of Section 116 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, to Factories and Workshops in which Wholesale Tailoring is carried on, and to Outworkers employed in Wholesale Tailoring, and the Occupiers and Contractors by whom they are employed [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table 54

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (SANITARY ACCOMMODATION).—Copy presented, of Order made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, dated 4th February, 1903, in pursuance of Section 9 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, determining what is sufficient and suitable accommodation in the way of sanitary conveniences within the meaning of that section [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table 54

CASUALTIES TO STEAM BOILERS (MERCANTILE MARINE).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 26th November, 1902 ; *Lord Charles Beresford*] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 1.] 54

CASUALTIES TO STEAM BOILERS (UNITED KINGDOM).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 26th November, 1902 ; *Lord Charles Beresford*] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 2] 54

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE MARKS ACTS.—Copy presented, of Patents Rules, 1903, under the Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks Acts, 1883 to 1902 [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table 54

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BOARD OF AGRICULTURE ACT, 1889.—Copy presented, of Draft Order in Council transferring to the Board of Agriculture all the powers and duties which were conferred on the Commissioners of His Majesty's Works and Public Buildings in respect of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, by or in pursuance of Section 22 of the Crown Lands Act, 1851, or the Parks Regulation Act, 1872 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 55

INEBRIATES ACTS, 1879 TO 1899 (RULES FOR RETREATS) (IRELAND).—Copy presented of Rules for Retreats in Ireland licensed under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1899, dated 3rd February, 1903, approved by the Lord Lieutenant [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 55

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE ACT (IRELAND), 1877.—Copies presented, of two Orders in Council, dated 17th November, 1902, giving effect to Rules of Court under The Supreme Court of Judicature Act (Ireland), 1877 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 55

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (PROCLAMATION).—Copy presented, of a Proclamation, dated 2nd February, 1903, revoking the several Proclamations mentioned in the Schedule thereto [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 55

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Time Table of Examinations for 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 55

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Additional Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland varying the Rules and Programme of Examinations for 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 55

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY PENSIONS.—Copy presented, of Return showing the names of all Constabulary Officers now in receipt of Pensions, of all Head Constables, Sergeants, and Constables, and of all Widows and Children to whom Pensions have been granted since the Constabulary Estimate for 1902–3 was prepared, with the amount and date of Pension in each case [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 55

METEOROLOGY.—Copy presented, of Report of the Meteorological Council to the Royal Society for the year ending 31st March, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 56

CHELSEA HOSPITAL.—Account presented, for the year ended 31st March, 1902, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 3.] 56

TREASURY CHEST.—Account presented, for the year 1901–2, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 4] 56

CONSOLIDATED FUND.—Abstract Account presented, showing the issues made from the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom in the financial year ended 31st March, 1902, for the Interest and Management of the Debt, for the Civil List, and for all other Issues in the financial year for services charged directly on the said Fund; with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 5.] 56

MILITARY WORKS ACTS, 1897, 1899, AND 1901.—Account presented, for the period ended 31st March, 1902, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 6.] 56

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IMPERIAL OTTOMAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1855.—Copy presented, of Account for the year 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 56

ARMY (ORDNANCE FACTORIES) (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT).—Appropriation Account, presented, of the sums granted by Parliament for the expense of the Ordnance Factories, the cost of the productions of which have been charged to the Army, Navy, and Indian and Colonial Governments, etc., and the Statement of the Surpluses and Deficits upon the Grants for the year ended 31st March, 1902, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 7.] 57

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES AND SHOP CLUBS.—Copy presented, of Regulation, dated 1st January, 1903, made by the Treasury under the Friendly Societies Act, 1896, with reference to Friendly Societies desirous of being certified under The Shop Clubs Act, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 57

DUCHY OF LANCASTER.—Accounts presented, for the year ended 20th December, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 8.] 57

BARRACKS ACT, 1890.—Account presented, showing the money raised and issued under the provisions of the Act, the securities created in respect thereof, and the amount expended for the purposes of the Act to the 31st March, 1902, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 9.] 57

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 15th January, 1903, declaring that John Gledhill, Post Office Sub-Office Postman, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 57

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 17th December, 1902, granting a retired allowance to Mr. Henry Brown, Assistant Superintendent Second Class, Newcastle-on-Tyne Post Office, under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 57

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 22nd January, 1903, granting a retired allowance to Mr. Thomas Riley, Principal Foreman in Charge of the Metal Foundries, Rolling Mills, and Quick-firing Case Factory, Royal Laboratory, Woolwich, under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 58

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORTS).—Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Southern Division of Scotland for the year 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 58

LOCAL TAXATION (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Annual Local Taxation Returns for Scotland for the year 1900–1901 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 10.] 58

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN.—Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Aberdeen for 1901–2 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 11.]... 58

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.—Copy presented, of Report on the state of the Finances of the University, made by the University Court, for the year to 31st August, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 12.] 58

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UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.—Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Edinburgh for the year 1901–2 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 13.] 58

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.—Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Glasgow for 1901–2 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 14.]... 58

GIBRALTAR.—Copy presented, of Report on the proposed Eastern Harbour and Dock at Gibraltar (with drawings) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table... 58

GREENWICH HOSPITAL AND TRAVERS' FOUNDATION.—Accounts presented, for the year ended 31st March, 1902, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 15.] 59

MILITARY MANŒUVRES, 1903.—Copy presented, of Draft Order in Council relative to Military Manœuvres, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table ... 59

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Lunacy.—Copy of Return to the Lord Chancellor of the number of Visits made and the number of Patients seen by the several Commissioners in Lunacy during the six months ending on the 31st December, 1902 [by Act].

2. Lunacy.—Copy of Return of all sums received by the Visitors of Lunatics for travelling expenses, or upon any other account, from 1st January to 31st December, 1902 [by Act].

3. Local Government Act, 1888 (Rule).—Copy of Rule under Section 89 (3) of the Local Government Act, 1888 [by Act]... 59

ADDRESS IN REPLY TO HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

Mr. Gretton (*Derbyshire, S.*) 59
Captain Greville (*Bradford, E.*) 62

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (*Stirling Burghs*) 66
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) 90
Mr. Schwann (*Manchester, N.*) 102

It being half-past Seven, the debate stood adjourned till this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Question again proposed. Debate resumed.

Mr. Schwann 106
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) 109
The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 111
Mr. Stevenson (Suffolk, Eye) 114
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 118
The Postmaster General (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) ... 124
Mr. Tomkinson (Cheshire, Crewe) 129

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Dr. Macnamara.*)

Put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjourned at ten minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, 18th FEBRUARY, 1903.

The House met at Two of the clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.—The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means ... 133

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND).—Petitions for Legislation: from Banff; Ordiquhill; and Rothiemay; to lie upon the Table 133

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.—Petitions for prohibition: from Rugby; and Basingstoke; to lie upon the Table 133

VARATHANWNTHAJEE, RY VIJAGA, SAHIB. Petition of Ry Vijaga Varathanwnthajee, Sahib, for redress of Grievances; to lie upon the Table ... 133

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES (ELECTORS, ETC.) (UNITED KINGDOM).—Address for "Return showing, with regard to each Parliamentary Constituency in the United Kingdom, the total number and, as far as possible, the number in each class of electors on the register now in force, and also showing the population and inhabited houses in each constituency (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 70, of Session 1902)."—*Sir Charles Dilke.*) 133

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the urban district of Whitley and Monkseaton in the county of Northumberland (North Shields, Tynemouth, and District Light Railways (Extension) Order, 1902) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 133

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LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the County of Gloucester, in the borough of Cheltenham, and in the urban district of Charlton Kings (Cheltenham and District Light Railway (Extensions No. 2) Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 134

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the county of Wilts, from Amesbury to Bulford (Amesbury and Military Camp Light Railway (Bulford Extension) Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 134

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the county of Cornwall, from Padstow to Tregurrian, in the Parish of St. Mawgan (Padstow, Bedruthan, and Mawgan Light Railway Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 134

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the municipal borough of Poole and the urban district of Branksome, in the county of Dorset (Poole and District Light Railway (Extension) Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table. 134

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the county of Essex, in the urban districts of Walthamstow, Leyton, and Chingford (Walthamstow and District Light Railway Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 134

MILITIA ACT, 1882 (DEPUTY LIEUTENANTS, IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Return of descriptions of qualifications of Deputy Lieutenants lodged during 1902, as furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 135

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS (IRELAND).—Copy presented of Amended General Regulations made by the Local Government Board for Ireland, dated 9th February, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 135

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND).—Copies presented, of two General Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland, dated 13th May, 1902, and 17th December, 1902, respectively [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 135

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.—Copy presented, of Report by the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords and the Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, that they are of opinion that the Fife Electric Power Company Order, the Hamilton, Motherwell, and Wishaw Tramways Order, the Life Association of Scotland Order, the Scottish American Mortgage Company, Limited, Order, the Lanarkshire and Dumbartonshire Railway Order, and the Glasgow Corporation (Police) Order ought to be dealt with by Private Bill and not by Provisional Order [by Act]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 16.] 135

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DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 AND 1896.—Copies presented, of Five Orders, numbered respectively 6594, 6608, 6612, 6615, and 6616, relating to the Landing of Foreign Animals in Great Britain [by Act]; to lie upon the Table. 136

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ROYAL ENGINEERS—PROMOTION OF OFFICERS.—Question, Major Evans-Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 138

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR MEDALS—REASONS FOR AWARDING TO KAFFIRS.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick ... 138

BALLOT FOR BILLS AND MOTIONS.

The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 139

Motion made, and Question proposed—

That no Bills, other than Government Bills, be introduced in anticipation of the ballot, and that all Members who desire to ballot, whether for Bills or for Motions, for Tuesday, 24th February, and Tuesday, 3rd March, and Wednesday, 25th February, and Wednesday, 4th March, do hand in their names at the Table during the sitting of the House on the first or second day of the session, and that a copy of such notices be handed in at the latest during the sitting of the House on the third day of the session.

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That the ballot for the precedence of the said Bills and Motions be taken on the third day on which the House sits, at a convenient time and place to be appointed by Mr. Speaker, and that the presentation of Bills on the fourth sitting day be taken as soon after twelve o'clock as Mr. Speaker may deem convenient.—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Mr. John Ellis (*Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe*) 139
Mr. James Lowther (*Kent, Thanet*) 140
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Question put, and agreed to.

Ballot for Bills and Motions.—Ordered, That no Bills, other than Government Bills, be introduced in anticipation of the ballot, and that all Members who desire to ballot, whether for Bills or for Motions, for Tuesday, 24th February, and Tuesday, 3rd March, and Wednesday, 25th February, and Wednesday, 4th March, do hand in their names at the Table during the sitting of the House on the first or second day of the session, and that a copy of such notices be handed in, at the latest, during the sitting of the House on the third day of the session. That the ballot for the precedence of the said Bills and Motions be taken on the third day on which the House sits, at a convenient time and place, to be appointed by Mr. Speaker, and that the presentation of Bills on the fourth sitting day be taken as soon after twelve o'clock as Mr. Speaker may deem convenient.—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

King's Speech (Motion for an Address).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament.—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Question again proposed.—Debate resumed.

Housing of the Working Classes:—

Dr. Macnamara (*Camberwell, N.*) 142
Mr. Kearley (*Devonport*) 149

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question to add the words 'And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the greatest hardships are inflicted upon many of your working-class subjects by reason of the lack of proper housing accommodation, and that immediate Parliamentary attention to this evil is one of the most pressing of the necessities of domestic policy."—(*Dr. Macnamara.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

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Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 178
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Sir John Dickson-Poynder (Wiltshire, Chippenham) 190
Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick's)... 191
Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.) 193
Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland) 195
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Mr. Duke (Plymouth) 198
Mr. Moon (St. Pancras, N.) 200
Mr. Herbert Robertson (Hackney, S.) 200

Question put.

House divided :—Ayes, 166 ; Noes, 205. (Division List No. 2).

Main Question again proposed.

BRITISH INTERESTS IN CHINA AND PERSIA.

Mr. Joseph Walton (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley)... 203

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Main Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton*).

Main Question again proposed: Debate resumed.

Mr. Joseph Walton... 216
Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid.) 220

Amendment proposed—at the end of the Question to add the words:

"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that it is essential that adequate measures should be taken for the safeguarding and promotion of the commercial and political interests of the British Empire in both China and Persia."—(*Mr. Joseph Walton*).

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 223
Mr. Keswick (Surrey, Epsom) 227

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The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Lord Cranborne, Rochester*) 229
Mr. Norman (*Wolverhampton, S.*) 236
Sir Edward Grey (*Northumberland, Berwick*) 241

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

THE UNEMPLOYED.

Mr Keir Hardie (*Merthyr Tydvil*) 247

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS, THURSDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

REPORT by the CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES of the House of Lords and the CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS in the House of Commons—

"That, having regard to Section 16 (2) of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, the provisions of the Fife Electric Power Company Order, and Part III. of the Hamilton, Motherwell, and Wishaw Tramways Order, are of such a character that they ought to be dealt with by Private Bills and not by Provisional Orders.

"That the provisions of the Life Association of Scotland Order and the Scottish American Mortgage Company, Limited, Order do not relate wholly to Scotland, and are of such a character that they ought to be dealt with by Private Bills and not by Provisional Orders.

"That the provisions of the Lanarkshire and Dumbartonshire Railway Order are of such a character that they ought to be dealt with by Private Bill and not by Provisional Order.

"That the provisions of Parts IV. and V. of the Glasgow Corporation (Police) Order raise such questions of policy and principle that they ought to be dealt with by Private Bill and not by Provisional Order" 257

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Order in Council of the 16th December, 1902, amending the "Barotziland North-Western Rhodesia Order in Council, 1899."

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1858.—Order in Council of 16th December, 1902, approving a statement of proposed new and revised appointments and alteration of salaries in the establishment of the Secretary of State for India in Council 257

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.—Return of the number of aliens that arrived from the Continent at Ports in the United Kingdom in each month of the year 1903: Order to be laid before the House.—(*The Lord Wolverton*)... 258

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COLONIAL PROBATES ACT, 1892.—Order in Council of 16th February, 1903, applying the Colonial Probates Act, 1892, to the colony of the Transvaal... 258

DOCKYARD PORTS REGULATION ACT, 1865.—Order in Council of 16th February, 1903, defining the Dockyard Port of Portland and making regulations with respect thereto 258

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.—Two Orders of Council of the 16th February, 1903, fixing the establishment of the Corporation of the Trinity House; Confirming byelaws made by the Pilotage Board for the Port of Newport (Mon.) 258

ST. LUCIA.—Rule amending Rule No. 224 relating to the flogging of prisoners 258

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DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 AND 1896.—Five Orders, numbered 6,594, 6,608, 6,612, 6615, and 6,616 respectively, relating to the landing of foreign animals in Great Britain 258

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LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Orders made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising construction of light railways: in the Urban District of Whitley and Monkseaton, in the County of Northumberland, in the County of Gloucester, in the Borough of Cheltenham, and in the Urban District of Charlton Kings; in the County of Wilts, from Amesbury to Bulford; in the County of Cornwall, from Padstow to Trequrrain, in the parish of St. Mawgan; in the Municipal Borough of Poole and the Urban District of Branksome, in the County of Dorset; in the County of Essex, in the Urban Districts of Walthamstow, Leyton, and Chingford 258

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND) (GENERAL ORDERS).—Two General Orders, dated 13th May and 17th December, 1902 259

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS ACT, 1896.—Amended general regulations made by the Local Government Board for Ireland, dated 9th February, 1903 ... 259

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Shops (Hours of Closing) Bill [H. L.].—A Bill to empower local authorities to fix the hours of closing of shops was presented by the Lord Ribblesdale; read 1ª; and to be printed. [No. 1.]... 259

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Prevention of Corruption Bill [H. L.].—A Bill for the better prevention of corruption was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed. [No. 2.] ... 262

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.—Return (in part) respecting: laid before the House (pursuant to Order of this day), and to be printed. [No. 3.] ... 262

House adjourned at Ten minutes before Five o'clock till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.—The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means ... 262

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1. All Saints, Poplar (Rate Abolition).
2. Antrim, Down, Armagh, and Belfast Electric Power.
3. Aston Manor Improvement.
4. Bangor Corporation.
5. Barry Railway.
6. Belfast Water.
7. Birmingham Corporation.
8. Birmingham District Tramways.
9. Bournemouth Corporation Tramways.
10. Bournemouth Gas and Water.
11. Bradford Corporation.
12. Brighton Corporation.
13. Bristol Corporation.
14. British Gaslight Company (Norwich).
15. Bury and District Joint Water Board.
16. Cardiff Railway.
17. Carmarthenshire Electric Power.
18. Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity.
19. Chatham and District Light Railways.
20. Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power.
21. Derby Gas.
22. Dewsbury, Batley, and Birstal Tramways.
23. Didcot, Newbury, and Southampton Railway.
24. Dudley, Stourbridge, and District Tramways.
25. Exeter Corporation.
26. Exeter Railway.
27. Faversham Gas.
28. Frinton-on-Sea Sea Defences.
29. Gosport, Fareham, and Cosham Tramways.

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30. Harrogate Water.
31. Harrow and Stanmore Gas.
32. Hastings Harbour.
33. Hastings Harbour District Railway.
34. Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment).
35. Hastings Tramways (Extensions).
36. Hexham Gas.
37. Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways.
38. India Rubber, Gutta Percha, and Telegraph Works Company.
39. King's College, London.
40. Knott End Railway (Extension of Time).
41. Lima Railways.
42. Liverpool University.
43. London and North Western Railway.
44. London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway.
45. London County Asylums (Receiving Houses).
46. Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways.
47. Manchester Corporation.
48. Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire).
49. Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire).
50. Maryport Harbour.
51. Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.
52. Mid Yorkshire Tramways.
53. Milford Docks.
54. Nantwich Gas.
55. Nantwich Urban District Council.
56. North Cheshire Tramways.
57. North Western Electricity and Power Gas.
58. North's Navigation Collieries.
59. Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways.
60. Old Bridewell Burying Ground.
61. Oldham Corporation.
62. Pelican and British Empire Life Office.
63. Plymouth and Stonehouse Gas.
64. Pontypridd Urban District Council.
65. Poole and District Electric Traction.
66. Port Talbot Railway and Docks.
67. Preston and Horwich Tramways.
68. Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage.
69. Rickmansworth Gas.
70. Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements.
71. St. Philip's Chapel (Regent Street).
72. Salford Corporation.
73. Scunthorpe Urban District Water.
74. Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation.
75. Shepshed Urban District Gas.
76. Shropshire, Worcestershire, and East Denbighshire Electric Power.
77. Somerset and District Electric Power.
78. Southampton Harbour.
79. South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways.
80. South Lancashire Tramways.
81. South Staffordshire Tramways.
82. South Wales Mineral Railway.
83. South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway.
84. Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal.
85. Sutton Coldfield Corporation.
86. Taff Vale Railway.
87. Torquay Corporation Water.

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88. Tynemouth and District Tramways.
89. Wakefield and District Tramways.
90. Wellington (Salop) Gas.
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FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890.—Copy presented, of Orders in Council of 16th February, 1903, entitled "The Siam Order in Council, 1903," and "The Southern Rhodesia Order in Council, 1903" [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 265

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.—Copy presented, of Order in Council of 16th February, 1903, fixing the Establishment of the Corporation of the Trinity House [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 265

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COLONIAL PROBATES ACT, 1892.—Copy presented, of Order in Council of 16th February, 1903, applying The Colonial Probates Act, 1892, to the Colony of Transvaal [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 266

GRENADA.—Copy presented, of Rule applying the Marks System to Escaped and Re-captured Prisoners [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 266

SAINT LUCIA.—Copy presented, of Rule amending Rule No. 224 relating to the Flogging of Prisoners [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 266

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NATIONAL DEBT (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).—Account presented, of the Gross Amount of all Moneys received and paid by the Commissioners for the reduction of the National Debt on account of the fund for Military Savings Banks, from 19th September, 1845, to 5th January, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 17.] 266

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KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Question again proposed.

THE UNEMPLOYED.

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Mr. John Burns (Battersea) 298

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question to add the words, 'But we desire humbly to express our regret that Your Majesty's Advisers have not seen fit to recommend the inclusion therein of such measure or measures as would have empowered the Government and local administrative authorities to acquire land for cultivation, and to set up undertakings whereby men and women unable to find employment in the ordinary labour market might be profitably set to work.'"—(*Mr. Keir Hardie.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Jesse Collings (Birmingham, Bordesley) 309
Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, W.R., Cleveland) 314
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 319
Sir Robert Reid (Dumfries Burghs) 325
The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 328
Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green) 337
Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central) 338
Mr. Fenwick (Northumberland, Wansbeck)... 340
Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith Burghs) 342
Mr. Cawley (Lancashire, Prestwich) 344

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 161; Noes, 201. (Division List No. 3.)

Main Question again proposed.

THE LONDON AND GLOBE FINANCE CORPORATION.

Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton)... 347
Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple) 354

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'And we humbly express our regret that no prosecution has been instituted against the directors of the London and Globe Finance Corporation.'"—(*Mr. Lambert.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

The Attorney-General (*Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs*) 355

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till the evening sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [19th February] to Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'And we humbly express our regret that no prosecution has been instituted against the directors of the London and Globe Finance Corporation.'"—(*Mr. Lambert.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Sir Robert Finlay 358
Sir Robert Reid (*Dumfries Burghs*) 361
Sir Frederick Banbury (*Camberwell, Peckham*) 364
Mr. Duke (*Plymouth*) 364
Mr. William McArthur (*Cornwall, St. Austell*) 367
The Solicitor General (*Sir Edward Carson, Dublin University*) 368
Sir John Brunner (*Cheshire, Northwich*) 372
Sir Albert Rollit (*Islington, S.*) 373
The First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) ... 376

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 115 ; Noes, 166. (Division List No. 4.)

Main Question again proposed.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN AND PUBLIC COMPANIES.

Mr. Swift MacNeill (*Donegal, S.*) 381
Mr. Roche (*Galway, E.*) 392

Another Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that thirty-three of the fifty-six Ministers of the Crown who constitute Your Majesty's Administration hold among them no fewer than sixty-eight directorships in public companies, and that we consider the position of a public company director to be incompatible with the position of a Minister of the Crown, and that the union of such offices is calculated to lower the dignity of public life.'"—(*Mr. Swift MacNeill.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Debate arising.

And, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 20TH FEBRUARY, 1903.

ROLL OF THE LORDS.—The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had prepared and laid it on the Table. The same was ordered to be printed. (No. 4.) 393

TURKEY, NO. 1 (1903).—Correspondence respecting the affairs of South Eastern Europe 393

CHINA, NO. 1 (1903).—Despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Peking forwarding a Report by Mr. W. J. Clennell, His Majesty's Consul at Kiukiang, respecting the Province of Kiangsi 393

ARMY (MILITIA TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS).—Militia Training Return (1902); Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 393

SARDINIAN LOAN.—Annual Account for 1902; Final Account 393

GREEK LOAN.—Annual Account for 1902... 393

NATIONAL DEBT (SAVINGS BANKS AND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES).

Account of the gross amount of all sums received and paid by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt on account of banks for savings and friendly societies in Great Britain and Ireland, from their commencement at 6th August, 1817, to 20th November, 1902, inclusive.

Account of the several transactions which have taken place, during the year ended 20th November, 1902, in the investment of all moneys which came into the hands of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt for savings banks and friendly societies.

Account showing the aggregate amount of the liabilities of the Government to the trustees of savings banks and friendly societies respectively on 20th November, 1902, etc.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 393

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 20TH FEBRUARY, 1903.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

ADJOURNMENT.—Resolved, that this House, at the rising of the House this day, do adjourn till Monday next.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood*) 394

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NEW WRIT.—For Dublin University, in the room of the Right Honble. William Edward Hartpole Lecky (Chiltern Hundreds).—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood*) 394

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND).—Petitions for legislation: from Newburgh; Monimail; Abernethy; Kilindrach; Kilsyth; Hamilton; Jura; and Largs; to lie upon the Table 394

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS (SANITARY CONVENIENCES).—Petition from Manchester, for enforcement of the Home Office Order; to lie upon the Table 394

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TURKEY (No. 1, 1903).—Copy presented, of correspondence respecting the affairs of South Eastern Europe [by Command]; to lie upon the Table ... 394

CHINA (No. 1, 1903).—Copy presented, of despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Peking forwarding a Report by Mr. W. J. Clennell, His Majesty's Consul at Kiukiang, respecting the Province of Kiangsi [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 394

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES FUND, 1901–2.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 19th February; *Mr. Hayes Fisher*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 18] 395

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 19th February; *Mr. Hayes Fisher*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 19] 395

NATIONAL GALLERY (REPORT).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 19th February; *Mr. Hayes Fisher*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 20] 395

GREEK LOAN OF 1898.—Account presented, up to 31st December, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 21] 395

SARDINIAN LOAN.—Account presented, of the Total Sums issued out of the Consolidated Fund and advanced to His Majesty the King of Sardinia, and of the Sums received to 31st December, 1902, for Interest and Sinking Fund thereof [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 22] ... 395

NATIONAL DEBT (SAVINGS BANKS AND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES). -Annual Account presented, for the period ended 20th November, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 23] 395

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS).—Appropriation Accounts presented, for the year ending 31st March, 1902, together with the Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon, and certain Reports upon Store Accounts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 24] 395

NAVY (MANŒUVRES) Copy presented, of Narrative of the Combined Manœuvres by Mediterranean, Channel, and Cruiser Squadrons, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 395

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

SCOTCH EDUCATION GRANT.—Question, Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 396

IRELAND—DELAY IN ERECTION OF NEW POST OFFICE AT BELTURBET.—Question, Mr. McGovern (Cavan, W.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain ... 396

CRIMINAL PROCEDURE CODE IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Mr. Toulmin (Bury); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 396

DRAINAGE AND IMPROVEMENT OF LANDS ACTS—EXPENDITURE FOR 1902.—Question, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Hanbury... 397

TUBERCULOSIS COMMISSION—PUBLICATION OF REPORT.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 397

COAL TAX—SHIPMENTS DURING 1902.—Question, Mr. David Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 397

INCOME TAX.—Question, Mr. Morton (Devonport); Answer, Mr. Ritchie ... 398

TRADE AND NAVIGATION RETURNS—DEFINITION OF SMALL COAL.—Question, Mr. David Thomas; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 398

LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S EDUCATION SCHEME — OBJECTION BY BOARD OF EDUCATION.—Question, Mr. Levy (Leicestershire, Loughborough); Answer, Sir William Anson 399

THE GRENADIER GUARDS—QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE.—Question, Mr. Lucas (Portsmouth); Ruling, Mr. Speaker 399

NEW BILLS.

Church Discipline Bill.—"To amend the Church Discipline Act of 1840 and the Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874," presented by Mr. David MacIver; supported by Mr. Austin Taylor, Mr. Charles M'Arthur, Mr. Mellor, Mr. M. W. Ridley, Mr. Hoult, Sir Albert Rollit, and Mr. Brand; to be read a second time upon Friday, 13th March, and to be printed. [Bill 1] 400

Rating of Machinery Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the rating of hereditaments containing machinery," presented by Mr. Chapman, supported by Sir Edward Strachey, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir John Dorington, Mr. Cawley, Sir William Tomlinson, Mr. Emmott, and Colonel Royds; to be read a second time on Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 2] 400

Land Values Assessment and Rating Bill.—"To provide for the separate assessment and rating of Land Values," presented by Dr. Macnamara; supported by Mr. John Burns, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Charles Douglas, Mr. Emmott, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. Robson, Mr. Trevelyan, and Mr. Whitley; to be read a second time upon Friday, 27th March, and to be printed. [Bill 3] 400

Merchant Shipping (Lighthouses) Bill.—"To amend the Law with regard to Lighthouses, and to abolish Light Dues," presented by Mr. Charles M'Arthur; supported by Mr. Evelyn Cecil, Colonel Denny, Sir Francis Evans, Mr. Field, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir John Leng, Mr. Nicol, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Renwick, Sir Robert Ropner, and Mr. Charles Wilson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 4] 400

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Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal) Bill.—"To provide Compensation in certain cases of Non-Renewal of Licences to sell intoxicating Liquors," presented by Mr. Butcher; supported by Mr. Galloway, Mr. Flower, and Mr. Groves; to be read a second time upon Friday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 5] 401

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sisetr Bill.—"To amend the Law as to Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister," presented by Sir Gilbert Parker; supported by Mr. Rutherford, Sir Brampton Gurdon, Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, Mr. Hambro, Mr. M. W. Ridley, Sir Joseph Leese, Mr. MacIver, Mr. Mellor, Mr. Melville, Mr. Charles Shaw, and Sir Barrington Simeon; to be read a second time upon Friday, 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 6] 401

Trade Disputes Bill.—"To legalise the peaceful conduct of Trade Disputes," presented by Mr. Shackleton; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Fenwick, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Jacoby, and Mr. Pickard; to be read a second time upon Friday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 7] 401

Innkeepers' Liability Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the Liability of Innkeepers," presented by Sir Brampton Gurdon; supported by Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Gretton, Mr. Bousfield, Mr. Levy, Mr. Seeley, and Sir John Brunner; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 8] 401

Railways (Private Sidings) Bill. "To explain and amend Section 76 of the Railways Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and to amend the Railway and Canal Traffic Acts, 1854 to 1888," presented by Sir John Brunner; to be read a second time upon Friday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 9] ... 401

Coal Mines Regulation Bill. "To amend the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887," presented by Mr. Markham; supported by Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Pickard, Mr. William Abraham, Mr. Thomas Bayley, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Hatch, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Theodore Taylor, Mr. M'Kenna, and Mr. Herbert Lewis; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th May, and to be printed. [Bill 10] 402

Aged Pensioners Bill. "To provide Pensions for the aged deserving poor," presented by Mr. Remnant; supported by Mr. Goulding, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Bull, Mr. Forde Ridley, and Mr. Groves; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 11] 402

Conspiracy Law Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Conspiracy Laws," presented by Mr. O'Dowd; supported by Mr. Cullinan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien; to be read a second time upon Friday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 12] 402

Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill.—"To grant Certificates to Persons in Charge of Steam Engines and Boilers," presented by Mr. Fenwick; supported by Sir William Allan, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Pickard, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Levy, and Mr. Jacoby; to be read a second time upon Friday, 27th March, and to be printed. [Bill 13] 402

Hall-Marking of Foreign Plate Bill.—"To amend the Law with regard to the assaying of Gold and Silver Plate and Jewellery," presented by Mr. Samuel Roberts; supported by Mr. Stuart Wortley, Sir Benjamin Stone, Sir Joseph Dimsdale, and Mr. Remnant; to be read a second time upon Friday, 27th March, and to be printed. [Bill 14] 402

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Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Saturdays (Ireland) Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors in Ireland on Saturdays; and for other purposes connected therewith," presented by Mr. Sloan; supported by Sir Thomas Esmonde, Colonel Saunderson, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, Mr. Flynn, Mr. T. L. Corbett, Dr. Thompson, Sir James Haslett, Mr. Hugh Law, and Mr. T. W. Russell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 15] 402

Elementary Education Amendment Bill.—"To amend The Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act, 1899," presented by Mr. Heywood Johnstone; supported by Mr. Haldane, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir Joseph Leese, Mr. Vicary Gibbs, Sir George Bartley, Mr. Leigh Bennett, Mr. Bond, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Dr. Farquharson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 16] 403

Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Labourers (Ireland) Acts," presented by Mr. Dillon; supported by Mr. William Redmond, Mr. O'Shee, Captain Donelan, Mr. Lundon, and Mr. Sheehan; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th May, and to be printed. [Bill 17] 403

Foreign Shipowners' Liability Bill.—"To amend the law relating to the liability of Foreign Shipowners for personal injuries," presented by Mr. Harry Samuel; supported by Mr. Buxton, Mr. Charles Wilson, Sir George Newnes, Mr. Flower, Sir Joseph Lawrence, Mr. Bell, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Morton, Major Evans-Gordon, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Mr. Harold Reckitt; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 18] 403

Detention of Poor Persons (Scotland) Bill.—"To extend the powers of the Local Government Board for Scotland in regard to the Detention of Poor Persons in poorhouses and parish hospitals," presented by Mr. Baird; supported by Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Andrew Agnew, and Mr. Hunter Craig; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th May, and to be printed. [Bill 19] 403

Town Tenants (Ireland) Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to Town Tenants in Ireland," presented by Mr. Kendal O'Brien; supported by Mr. Field, Mr. Lundon, Mr. Cullinan, and Mr. Condon; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 20] 404

Roman Catholics' Disabilities Removal Bill.—"To provide for the removal of certain disabilities affecting Roman Catholics in Great Britain and Ireland," presented by Dr. Robert Ambrose; supported by Mr. Clancy, Mr. Dillon, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. William Abraham (Cork), Captain Donelan, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, Mr. William O'Brien, and Mr. Reddy; to be read a second time upon Friday, 12th June, and to be printed. [Bill 21] 404

Jury Acts (Ireland) Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Jury Acts (Ireland)," presented by Mr. O'Mara; supported by Mr. Dillon, Captain Donelan, Mr. Hugh Law, Mr. MacVeagh, and Mr. Roche; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 22] 404

Education (Scotland) Bill.—"To amend the Education (Scotland) Acts," presented by Mr. Parker Smith; supported by Mr. Baird, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Charles Douglas, Sir John Leng, and Sir John Stirling-Maxwell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 23] 404

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Light Locomotives (Ireland) Bill.—"To provide for the authorisation of races with Light Locomotives in Ireland," presented by Mr. Scott Montagu; supported by Mr. Arthur Stanley, Mr. Rose, Colonel Saunderson, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, Mr. Delany, and Mr. Minch; to be read a second time on Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 24] 404

Pistols Bill.—"To regulate the sale and use of Pistols or other Firearms," presented by Mr. Helme; supported by Mr. M. W. Ridley, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, and Mr. Stuart-Wortley; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 2nd April, and to be printed. [Bill 25] 405

Licensing (Ireland) Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors in Ireland," presented by Mr. Hugh Law; supported by Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Wood, Mr. O'Mara, Sir James Haslett, Mr. Jordan, and Mr. T. L. Corbett; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 26] 405

Drunkenness and Registration of Clubs (Ireland) Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to Drunkenness and the Registration of Clubs in Ireland," presented by Mr. T. W. Russell; supported by Mr. Jordan, Mr. T. L. Corbett, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. John Gordon, Mr. M'Govern, and Sir Thomas Esmonde; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 27] 405

Shops Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to Shops," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. John Burns, Mr. Flower, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. Kemp, Mr. McCrae, Mr. Melville, Mr. Nannetti, Sir Barrington Simeon, and Mr. Tennant; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 28] 405

Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities Bill.—"To establish a single Franchise at all elections and thereby to abolish University representation, and to Remove the Disabilities of Women," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. John Burns, Mr Keir Hardie, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Logan, Dr. Macnamara, Captain Norton, and Mr. Shackleton; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 29] 405

Wages Boards Bill.—"To provide for the establishment of Wages Boards," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. John Burns, Mr. McKenna, Mr. Tennant, and Mr. Trevelyan; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 30] 405

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill.—"To give ratepayers a direct Veto on the Liquor Traffic in their respective areas in Scotland," presented by Mr. Hunter Craig; supported by Mr. Crombie, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Black, Sir William Dunn, Mr. Eugene Wason, Dr. Robert Wallace, Mr. John D. Hope, and Dr. Farquharson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 31] 406

Out-Door Relief (Friendly Societies) Bill.—"To amend the Out-Door Relief (Friendly Societies) Act, 1894," presented by Sir Edward Strachey; supported by Sir Samuel Hoare, Sir William Holland, Mr. Goulding, Mr. Brand, Sir Albert Rollit, Sir Harry Bullard, Mr. Warner, Mr. Thomas Bayley, Mr. Yoxall, Mr. Rigg, and Mr. Harry Samuel; to be read a second time upon Friday next, and to be printed. [Bill 32] 406

County Courts Jurisdiction Extension Bill.—"To extend the Jurisdiction of the County Courts," presented by Sir Albert Rollit; supported by Sir Henry Fowler; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 33] 406

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Solicitors Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to Solicitors," presented by Sir Albert Rollit; supported by Sir Henry Fowler; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 34] 406

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—"To prohibit the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday," presented by Mr. Perks; supported by Mr. Charles Wilson, Mr. Crawford Smith, Mr. Compton Rickett, Mr. Randles, Mr. Fenwick, Sir Joseph Firbank, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Hain, and Mr. Pickard; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 35] 406

Old Age Pensions Bill.—"To provide Pensions for persons over sixty-five years of age," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr. Burt, Mr. John Burns, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Sir Walter Foster, and Mr. Broadhurst; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 36] 406

Coroners' Inquests (Railway Fatalities) Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to Coroners' Inquests in the case of Fatal Accidents on Railways," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. John Burns, and Mr. Schwann; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 37] 407

Vaccination Prosecutions Bill.—"To provide that no prosecution under the Vaccination Acts shall be commenced without the authority of the Guardians," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Sir John Rolleston, Mr. Goddard, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Brigg, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Corrie Grant, and Mr. Bell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 38] 407

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [19th February] to main question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Which Amendment was, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that thirty-three of the fifty-six Ministers of the Crown who constitute Your Majesty's Administration hold among them no fewer than sixty-eight directorships in public companies, and that we consider the position of a public company director to be incompatible with the position of a Minister of the Crown, and that the union of such offices is calculated to lower the dignity of public life."—(*Mr. Swift MacNeill.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick) 408
Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.) 412
Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 413

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Mr. Purvis (*Peterborough*) 417
Sir William Harcourt (*Monmouthshire, W.*) 418
Sir William Tomlinson (*Preston*) 420
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) 421
Mr. Hemphill (*Tyrone, N.*) 429

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 109; Noes, 147. (Division List No. 5.)

Main Question again proposed.

THE CONDITION OF THE NAVY.

Sir William Allan (*Gateshead*) 433
Mr. Renwick (*Newcastle-on-Tyne*) 443

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

"And we humbly express our regret that no mention is made in His Majesty's Gracious Speech of the unsatisfactory condition of His Majesty's Navy."—(*Sir William Allan.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Sir John Colomb (*Great Yarmouth*) 446
The Secretary to the Admiralty (*Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.*) ... 447

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

THE HIGHLAND CROFTERS.

Mr. Weir (*Ross and Cromarty*) 452
Mr. John Dewar (*Inverness-shire*) 456

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

"And humbly to represent to Your Majesty that the present unrestricted extension of deer forests in the Highland crofting counties is detrimental to the welfare of the Highland population and Imperial interests, inasmuch as it renders more acute the difficulties which have so long existed in regard to the Highland land question; and seeing that the Royal Commission appointed in 1892 scheduled 1,782,785 acres of land in the crofting counties as capable of being cultivated to profit, or otherwise advantageously occupied by crofters or small tenants, this House is of opinion that steps should be taken with a view to admit of the ready acquisition of such of these lands as may be required for occupation by the people; and further, that the future extension of deer forests be subject to a Board, such as the Crofters Commission, with power to limit new deer forest areas to those lands only which are not suitable for cultivation or occupation by crofter tenants."—(*Mr. Weir.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

The Lord Advocate (*Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire*) 458
Mr. Bignold (*Wick Burghs*) 462

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The House divided :—Ayes, 98 ; Noes, 158. (Division List No. 6.)

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after half-past Five of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 23RD FEBRUARY, 1903.

ADDRESS.—The King's Answer to the Address of Tuesday last reported ; and Address and Answer to be printed and published 465

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners, that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—

All Saints, Poplar (Rate Abolition).
Antrim, Down, Armagh and Belfast Electric Power.
Aston Manor Improvement.
Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Transfer).
Bangor Corporation.
Barnsley Corporation (Water).
Barry Railway.
Bath Corporation Water.
Beckenham Urban District Council.
Belfast Street Tramways
Belfast Water.
Billingshurst and District Gas.
Birmingham Corporation.
Blackheath and Greenwich District Electric Light.
Bournemouth Corporation Tramways.
Bournemouth Gas and Water.
Bradford Corporation.
Bridgwater Gas.
Brighton Corporation.
Bristol Corporation.
Bristol, London, and Southern Counties Railway.
British Gas Light Company (Norwich).
Broadstairs Gas.
Burgess Hill and St. John's Common Gas.
Bury and District Joint Water Board.
Cardiff Railway.
Carmarthenshire Electric Power.
Castleblaney, Keady, and Armagh Railway (Extension of Time).
Central London Railway.
Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity.
Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway.
Cheltenham Improvement.
Cheshire Lines Committee.
City and North-East Suburban Electric Railway.
City and South London Railway.
Clapham Junction and Marble Arch Railway (No. 1).

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Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power.
Commercial Gas.
Cork Harbour.
Coventry and Arley Railway.
Coventry Electric Tramways.
Crystal Palace District Gas.
Derby Gas.
Didcot, Newbury, and Southampton Railway.
Dover Corporation.
Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area).
Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford Railway.
Dudley, Stourbridge and District Tramways.
East Ardsley Gas.
East Ham Improvement.
Ebbw Vale Water and Improvement.
Erith Tramways and Improvement.
Exeter Corporation.
Exeter Railway.
Faversham Gas.
Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours.
Frinton-on-Sea Sea Defences.
Gas Light and Coke Company.
Gas Light and Coke Company's Acts Amendment.
Gateshead Corporation.
Gorleston and Southtown Gas.
Great Central Railway.
Great Eastern Railway (No. 1).
Great Eastern Railway (No. 2).
Great Northern and City Railway.
Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (New Lines and Extensions).
Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (Various Powers).
Great Northern Railway.
Great Southern and Western Railway.
Great Western Railway.
Great Western Railway (Pension Fund).
Grindleford, Baslow, and Bakewell Railway.
Hainault Forest.
Hampton Court Gas.
Harrogate Water.
Harrow and Stanmore Gas.
Hastings Harbour.
Hastings Harbour District Railway.
Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment).
Hastings Tramways (Extension).
Hexham Gas.
Highland and Invergarry and Fort Augustus Railway Companies. (*Substituted Bill.*)
Humber Commercial Railway and Dock.
Hyde Corporation.
Indiarubber, Guttapercha, and Telegraph Works Company.
Ipswich Gas.
Kent Water Board.
King's College, London.
Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation.
Knott End Railway (Extension of Time).
Lancashire and Yorkshire and London and North-Western Railways (Steam Vessels).

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Leigh Corporation.
Lima Railways.
Liverpool University.
Llandrindod Wells Improvement.
London and North-Western Railway.
London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway.
London Building Acts (Amendment).
London County Asylums (Receiving Houses).
London County Council (Electric Supply).
London County Council (General Powers).
London Hydraulic Power.
London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway.
London United Tramways.
Maidstone Gas.
Manchester Corporation.
Market Drayton Gas.
Maryport Harbour.
Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.
Merthyr Tydvil Urban District Council.
Metropolitan District Railway (Works).
Middlesbrough Corporation.
Midland and Belfast and Northern Counties Railways.
Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland.
Midland Railway.
Milford Docks.
Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway.
Nantwich Gas.
Nantwich Urban District Council.
Nantyglo and Blaina Water.
Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynamman Railway.
Nelson Corporation.
New Hunstanton Improvement.
Newcastle-on-Tyne Electric Supply.
North Cheshire Tramways.
North-Eastern Railways.
North Middlesex Gas.
North-Western Electricity and Power Gas.
North-West London Railway.
North's Navigation Collieries.
Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways.
Old Bridewell Burying Ground.
Oldham Corporation.
Pelican and British Empire Life Office.
Plymouth and Stonehouse Gas.
Plymouth Corporation.
Pontypridd Urban District Council.
Poole and District Electric Traction.
Port Talbot Railway and Docks.
Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage.
Rickmansworth Gas.
Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements.
St. Philip's Chapel (Regent Street).
Salford Corporation.
Scarborough Gas.
Scunthorpe Urban District Water.
Seaforth and Sefton Junction Railway.
Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation.
Shropshire, Worcestershire, and East Denbighshire Electric Power.

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Sittingbourne District Gas.
Somerset and District Electric Power.
Southampton Harbour.
South-Eastern and London, Chatham and Dover Railways.
South Shields Corporation.
South Shields, Sunderland and District Tramways.
South Wales Mineral Railway.
South-Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway.
South Yorkshire Joint Railways.
Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal.
Stoke Newington Borough Council.
Stroud District and Cheltenham Tramways.
Sutton Coldfield Corporation.
Sutton District Water.
Taff Vale Railway.
Thames Conservancy.
Thames Steamboat Trust.
Torquay Corporation Water.
Ulster and Connaught Light Railways.
Walker and Wallsend Union Gas.
Watford and Edgware Railway.
Wellingborough and District Tramroads.
Wellington (Salop) Gas.
West Bromwich Corporation.
West Cumberland Electric Tramways.
Western Trust.
Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board.
West Ham Corporation.
West Sussex Water.
Willesden Urban District Council.
Winchester Water and Gas.
Wirral Railway.
Wisbech Canal (Abandonment).
Wolverhampton and Cannock Chase Railway (Extension of Time).
Wood Green Urban District Council.
Woolwich Borough Council.
Worthing Corporation (Tramways).

And the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with—

Birmingham District Tramways.
Chatham and District Light Railways.
Croydon and District Electric Tramways.
Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways.
Hove, Worthing and District Tramways.
Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways.
Metropolitan District Railway (Various Powers).
Mid Yorkshire Tramways.
Sheffield Corporation.
Shepshed Urban District Council Gas.
South Lancashire Tramways.
South Staffordshire Tramways.
Strabane and Letterkenny Railway.
Thames Steamboat Service.
Tynemouth and District Tramways.
Wigan Corporation Tramways 465

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COLONIES (ANNUAL).—Southern Nigeria ; Report for 1901 470

RAILWAYS.—Report on a visit to America, 19th September to 31st October, 1902, by Lieutenent-Colonel H. A. Yorke, R.E., Chief Inspecting Officer of Railways, Board of Trade 470

WAGES AND EFFECTS OF DECEASED SEAMEN.—Account of the sums received and paid in respect of the wages and effects of deceased seamen, in the year ended 31st March, 1902.

Presented [by Command] and ordered to lie on the Table 470

RAMSGATE HARBOUR.—Statement of the receipts and payments made by the Board of Trade for the year ended 31st March, 1902 ; together with an account of the receipt and issue of stores 470

TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS.—Eleventh Annual Report of the Proceedings of the Inspection Committee of Trustee Savings Banks, for the year ended 20th November, 1902 ; with appendices.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 470

Shops (Hours of Closing) Bill [H.L.].—To be read 2ª on Tuesday the 3rd of March next.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 23RD FEBRUARY, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means... 470

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the List reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, the Standing Orders have been complied with in the following cases, viz. :—

All Saints, Poplar (Rate Abolition).
Antrim, Down, Armagh, and Belfast Electric Power.
Aston Manor Improvement.
Bangor Corporation.
Barry Railway.
Belfast Water.

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Birmingham Corporation.
Bournemouth Corporation Tramways.
Bournemouth Gas and Water.
Bradford Corporation.
Brighton Corporation.
Bristol Corporation.
British Gaslight Company (Norwich).
Bury and District Joint Water Board.
Cardiff Railway.
Carmarthenshire Electric Power.
Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity.
Chatham and District Railways.
Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power.
Derby Gas.
Didcot, Newbury, and Southampton Railway.
Dudley, Stourbridge, and District Tramways.
Exeter Corporation.
Exeter Railway.
Faversham Gas.
Frinton-on-Sea Sea Defences.
Harrogate Water.
Harrow and Stanmore Gas.
Hastings Harbour.
Hastings Harbour District Railway.
Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment).
Hastings Tramways (Extensions).
Hexham Gas.
Indiarubber, Guttapercha, and Telegraph Works Company.
King's College, London.
Knott End Railway (Extension of Time).
Lima Railways.
Liverpool University.
London and North-Western Railway.
London, Brighton and South Coast Railway.
London and County Asylum (Receiving Houses).
Manchester Corporation.
Maryport Harbour.
Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.
Mid Yorkshire Tramways.
Milford Docks.
Nantwich Gas.
Nantwich Urban District Council.
North Cheshire Tramways.
North-Western Electricity and Power Gas.
North's Navigation Collieries.
Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways.
Old Bridewell Burying Ground.
Oldham Corporation.
Pelican and British Empire Life Office.
Plymouth and Stonehouse Gas.
Pontypridd Urban District Council.
Poole and District Electric Traction.
Port Talbot Railway and Docks.
Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage.
Rickmansworth Gas.
Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements.
St. Philip's Chapel (Regent Street).
Salford Corporation.

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Scunthorpe Urban District Water.
Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation.
Shropshire, Worcestershire and East Denbighshire Electric Power.
Somerset and District Electric Power.
Southampton Harbour.
South-Eastern and London, Chatham and Dover Railways.
South Wales Mineral Railway.
South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway.
Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal.
Sutton Coldfield Corporation.
Taff Vale Railway.
Torquay Corporation Water.
Wellington (Salop) Gas.
West Bromwich Corporation.
Western Trust.
Willesden Urban District Council.
Wirral Railway.
Wisbech Canal (Abandonment).
Worthing Corporation (Tramways).

And that they have certified that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in the following cases, viz. :—

Birmingham District Tramways.
Hove, Worthing and District Tramways.
Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways.
Shepshed Urban District Gas.
South Lancashire Tramways.
South Staffordshire Tramways.
Tynemouth and District Electric Tramways 471

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH.—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—

Birmingham District Tramways [Lords].
Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways [Lords].
Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways [Lords].
Shepshed Urban District Gas [Lords].
South Lancashire Tramways [Lords].
South Staffordshire Tramways [Lords].
Tynemouth and District Tramways [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 473

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—

Croydon and District Electric Tramways.
Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways.
Metropolitan District Railway (Various Powers).
Sheffield Corporation.
Strabane and Letterkenny Railway.
Thames River Steamboat Service.
Wigan Corporation Tramways.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 473

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PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.—The Deputy Chairman reported, That, after conferring with the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, for the purpose of determining in which House of Parliament the respective Bills should be first considered, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, they had determined that the Bills contained in the following List should originate in the House of Lords, viz. :—

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Hamilton, Motherwell, and Wishaw Tramways (Part III).
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Scottish-American Mortgage Company, Limited 474

BROADSTAIRS GAS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. James Lowther and Mr. Kimber 474

CITY AND SOUTH LONDON RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bond, Mr. Alban Gibbs, and Mr. David MacIver 474

CRYSTAL PALACE DISTRICT GAS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Fortescue Flannery and Mr. Kimber 474

DUBLIN IMPROVEMENT (BULL ALLEY AREA).—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Field, Mr. Harrington, Mr. M'Cann, and Mr. Nannetti 474

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GAS LIGHT AND COKE COMPANY'S ACTS AMENDMENT.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Burns, Mr. Alban Gibbs, and Sir Joseph Dimsdale 474

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GREAT NORTHERN, PICCADILLY, AND BROMPTON RAILWAY (VARIOUS POWERS).—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Henry Fowler, Mr. Alban Gibbs, and Mr. Whitmore 475

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Fison and Sir Frederick Banbury 475

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IPSWICH GAS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Charles Dalrymple and Mr. Goddard 475

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LEIGH CORPORATION.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Scott and Mr. Cawley 475

LLANDRINDOD WELLS IMPROVEMENT.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Alfred Thomas, Mr. Edwards, Lieutenant-Colonel Pryce-Jones, and Mr. Charles Morley 475

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LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS).—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Burns, Mr. Sydney Buxton, and Mr. Lough ... 475

LONDON, TILBURY AND SOUTHEND RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Round and Major Banes 475

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METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAY (WORKS).—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Perks and Sir Charles Dalrymple 476

MULLINGAR, KELLS, AND DROGHEDA RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Nolan, Mr. Hayden, and Mr. Patrick White 476

NANTYGLO AND BLAINA WATER.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir William Harcourt and Mr. Charles Morley 476

NEW HUNSTANTON IMPROVEMENT.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. George White and Mr. Hare 476

STROUD DISTRICT AND CHELTENHAM TRAMWAYS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir John Dorington and Mr. Charles Allen 476

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WEST SUSSEX WATER.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Emmott and Sir Joseph Leese... 476

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SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petition from Holmfirth, in favour; to lie upon the Table 477

VACCINATION ACT, 1898.—Petition from Haslingden, against alteration of the Law without an Inquiry by a Select Committee; to lie upon the Table 477

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WAGES AND EFFECTS OF DECEASED SEAMEN.—Account presented, of the Sums received and paid in respect of the Wages and Effects of Deceased Seamen in the year ended 31st March, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 477

RAILWAYS.—Copy presented, of Report on a visit to America, 9th September to 31st October, 1902, by Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. Yorke, R.E., Chief Inspecting Officer of Railways, Board of Trade [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 477

ALIEN IMMIGRATION—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 19th February; *Mr. Gerald Balfour*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 25] 477

TRADE AND NAVIGATION.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 19th February; *Mr. Gerald Balfour*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 26] ... ... ,, ... 477

RAMSGATE HARBOUR.—Copy presented, of Statement of the Receipts and Payments for the year ended 31st March, 1902, together with an Account of the Receipt and Issue of Stores [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 27] 477

CYPRUS.—Copy presented, of Correspondence respecting the Drought in Cyprus [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 478

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).—Copy presented, of Colonial Report, No. 381 (Southern Nigeria, Annual Report for 1901) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 478

ARMY (MILITIA TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS).—Copy presented, of the Militia Training Return, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 478

ARMY.—Copy presented, of State of the Six Army Corps Commands [by Command]; to lie upon the Table... 478

WOODS, FORESTS, AND LAND REVENUES.—Abstract Accounts presented, for the year ended 31st March, 1902, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 28] 478

ARMY (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT).—Copy presented, of the Appropriation Account for 1901–2, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon, and upon the Store Accounts of the Army [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 29] 478

TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS.—Copy presented, of Eleventh Annual Report of the Proceedings of the Inspection Committee for the year ended 20th November, 1902, with Appendices [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 30] 478

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ARTHUR ALFRED LYNCH.—Return of certified copies of the indictment, conviction, and sentence of the Court in the case of "The King against Arthur Alfred Lynch," tried in the King's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice on the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd days of January, 1903, and of the Order of the Court giving effect to the conditional pardon granted to the said Arthur Alfred Lynch; and also a certificate from the Governor of His Majesty's Prison, at Brixton, that the said Arthur Alfred Lynch is held in custody by him in pursuance of the said Order.

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Sir George Bartley (*Islington, N.*) 480

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Small Holders (Scotland) Bill.—"To extend to tenants of small holdings the benefits of the Crofters (Scotland) Acts," presented by Mr. Black ; supported by Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Weir, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. J. D. Hope, and Mr. Harmsworth ; to be read a second time on Friday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 39] 512

Congested Districts (Scotland) Act (1897) Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Congested Districts (Scotland) Act (1897), and to enlarge the powers conferred under that Act," presented by Mr. John Dewar ; supported by Mr. Thomas Shaw, Mr. Weir, and Mr. Cathcart Wason ; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 40] 513

Medical Acts Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Medical Acts, 1858 to 1886," presented by Sir John Batty Tuke ; supported by Sir John Gorst, Mr. James Campbell, Sir Richard Jebb, Mr. Talbot, and Sir Michael Foster ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 41] 513

Leasehold Enfranchisement Bill.—"To enable certain Leaseholders to become Freeholders," presented by General Laurie ; supported by Mr. Spear, Mr. Cohen, and Sir George Fardell ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 42] 513

Colonial Marriages Bill.—"To legalise certain Colonial Marriages," presented by General Laurie ; supported by Mr. Rothschild, Mr. Arthur Stanley, Sir Gilbert Parker, and Captain Jessel ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 12th June, and to be printed. [Bill 43] 513

Medical Act (1858) Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Medical Act of 1858," presented by General Laurie; supported by Mr. Rothschild, Sir Howard Vincent, Mr. Middlemore, and Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 44] 513

Medical Act (1886) Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Medical Act of 1886," presented by General Laurie; supported by Mr. Rothschild, Sir Howard Vincent, Mr. Middlemore, and Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 45] 513

Mines Eight Hours Bill.—"To limit the hours of underground workers in Mines to Eight Hours per day from bank to bank," presented by Mr. Ellis Griffith; supported by Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), Mr. Pickard, Mr. Joseph Walton, Mr. Thomas Bayley, Mr. Jacoby, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Hatch, Mr. William Jones, and Sir Albert Rollit; to be read a second time upon Friday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 46] 514

Leaseholders (Purchase of Fee Simple) Bill.—"To give facilities to Leaseholders for the purchase of the Fee Simple of their holdings," presented by Mr. Kearley; supported by Mr. Emmott, Sir William Holland, Mr. William M'Arthur, Mr. George Whiteley, and Mr. Field; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 5th May, and to be printed. [Bill 47] ... 514

Bankruptcy Law Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Law of Bankruptcy," presented by Sir Albert Rollit; supported by Sir Henry Fowler; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 48] 514

Housing of the Working Classes (London) Bill.—"To regulate the conditions under which displacements of persons of the Labouring Class may be made in London under statutory powers, and to require the provision of sufficient new Housing Accommodation," presented by Sir John Dickson-Poynder; supported by Sir John Gorst, Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Cust, and Major Evans Gordon; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 3rd March, and to be printed. [Bill 49] 514

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on main Question [17th February] "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign*,

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament." —(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Question again proposed.

ARMY ORGANISATION.

Mr. Beckett (*Yorkshire, N.R., Whitby*) 515
Major Seely (*Isle of Wight*) 531

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

"But we humbly regret that the organisation of the land forces is unsuited to the needs of the Empire, and that no proportionate gain in strength and efficiency has resulted from the recent increases in military expenditure."—(*Mr. Beckett.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 540
The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) ... 551
Mr. Yerburgh (Chester) 573
Mr. Courtenay Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) 577
Col. Legge (St. George's, Hanover Square)... 580
Mr. Claude Lowther (Cumberland, Eskdale) 581
Mr. Wylie (Dumbartonshire) 582

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this evening's sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

BAKER STREET AND WATERLOO RAILWAY (TRANSFER).—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Colonel Lockwood and Mr. Pym 585

BARNSLEY CORPORATION (WATER).—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Pickard and Mr. Joseph Walton 585

BATH CORPORATION WATER.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Colonel Murray, Mr. Edmond Wodehouse, and Mr. Dickinson 585

BECKENHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. H. W. Forster and Mr. Powell-Williams 585

BILLINGSHURST AND DISTRICT GAS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Emmott and Sir Joseph Leese 585

BLACKHEATH AND GREENWICH DISTRICT ELECTRIC LIGHT.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir John Willox and Mr. Kimber 585

BRIDGWATER GAS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Alexander Acland-Hood, Sir Edward Strachey, and Mr. Edward Stanley... ... 585

BRISTOL, LONDON, AND SOUTHERN COUNTIES RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bigwood, Mr. Colston, Mr. Charles Hobhouse, and Sir Edward Strachey 585

BURGESS HILL AND ST. JOHN'S COMMON GAS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Henry Fletcher and Mr. Goschen... 586

CASTLEBLANEY, KEADY, AND ARMAGH RAILWAY (EXTENSION OF TIME).—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lonsdale and Sir James Haslett 586

CENTRAL LONDON RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Asquith and Mr. Paulton... 586

CHARING CROSS, EUSTON, AND HAMPSTEAD RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Thomas Wrightson and Mr. Remnant 586

CHESHIRE LINES COMMITTEE.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Alexander Henderson and Mr. Chapman... 586

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CITY AND NORTH-EAST SUBURBAN ELECTRIC RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Leigh-Bennett and Mr. David Morgan ... 586

CLAPHAM JUNCTION AND MARBLE ARCH RAILWAY (NO. 1).—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lawson Walton and Mr. Fletcher Moulton... 586

COMMERCIAL GAS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir John Colomb and Mr. Kimber 586

CORK HARBOUR.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Donelan, Mr. Crean, and Sir Robert Penrose-FitzGerald ... 586

COVENTRY AND ARLEY RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Brand, Mr. Freeman Thomas, and Mr. Carvill 586

COVENTRY ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Brand, Mr. Freeman Thomas, and Mr. Carvill 586

DOVER CORPORATION.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. George Wyndham and Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas 587

DUBLIN, WICKLOW, AND WEXFORD RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. James O'Connor, Mr. Field, and Mr. Ffrench ... 587

EAST ARDSLEY GAS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Barran and Mr. Brotherton 587

EBBW VALE WATER AND IMPROVEMENT.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir William Harcourt and Mr. McKenna 587

ERITH TRAMWAYS AND IMPROVEMENT.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir William Hart Dyke and Mr. Henry William Forster ... 587

FISHGUARD AND ROSSLARE RAILWAYS AND HARBOURS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Goulding and Mr. David MacIver ... 587

GAS LIGHT AND COKE COMPANY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Alexander Henderson, Mr. Harris, and Mr. Alban Gibbs ... 587

GATESHEAD CORPORATION.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir James Joicey and Sir William Allan 587

GORLESTON AND SOUTHTOWN GAS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir John Colomb and Colonel Lucas 587

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Alexander Henderson and Mr. Chapman 587

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY (No. 1).—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Strutt and Mr. Penn 587

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY (No. 2).—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Strutt and Mr. Penn 588

GREAT NORTHERN AND CITY RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Weetman Pearson and Mr. Claude Hay... 588

GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Goulding and Mr. John Gordon... 588

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GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Brassey and Mr. David MacIver... 588

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY (PENSION FUND).—Petition, and Bill to be brought in by Mr. Llewellyn and Mr. Baldwin 588

GRINDLEFORD, BASLOW, AND BAKEWELL RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill to be brought in by Sir William Holland, Mr. Henry Joseph Wilson, and Mr. Bolton 588

HAMPTON COURT GAS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seale-Hayne and Mr. Skewes-Cox 588

HIGHLAND AND INVERGARRY AND FORT AUGUSTUS RAILWAY COMPANIES (SUBSTITUTED BILL).—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Bignold, and Mr. John Edward Gordon 588

HUMBER COMMERCIAL RAILWAY AND DOCK.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Doughty and Mr. Chapman 588

HYDE CORPORATION.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Chapman and Mr. Ashton 588

KINGSTON-UPON HULL CORPORATION.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Joseph Firbank, Sir Seymour King, Mr. Charles Wilson, and Sir James Woodhouse 588

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE AND LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAYS (STEAM VESSELS).—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir William Hornby and Colonel Lockwood 589

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (ELECTRIC SUPPLY).—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Burns and Mr. Bousfield 589

LONDON HYDRAULIC POWER.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Frederick Mappin and Sir John Aird 589

LONDON UNITED TRAMWAYS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Skewes-Cox and Mr. Remnant 589

MARKET DRAYTON GAS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Colonel Kenyon-Slaney and Mr. Heath 589

MERTHYR TYDVIL URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. David Thomas and Mr. Keir Hardie 589

MIDDLESBROUGH CORPORATION.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Colonel Sadler and Mr. Herbert Samuel 589

MIDLAND AND BELFAST AND NORTHERN COUNTIES RAILWAYS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Frederick Mappin, Sir William Coddington, and Mr. O'Neill 589

MIDLAND GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY OF IRELAND.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. M'Cann, Mr. Patrick White, and Mr. Carvill ... 589

MIDLAND RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Frederick Mappin and Sir William Coddington 589

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NEATH, PONTARDAWE, AND BRYNAMAN RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. David Thomas and Mr. Samuel Evans 589

NELSON CORPORATION.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Shackleton and Mr. Mitchell 590

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE ELECTRIC SUPPLY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir William Allan and Mr. Burt 590

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Wharton, Sir James Kitson, and Sir Edward Grey 590

NORTH MIDDLESEX GAS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Colonel Bowles, Mr. Joseph Howard, and Mr. Bigwood 590

NORTH-WEST LONDON RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Price and Mr. Cautley... 590

PLYMOUTH CORPORATION.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Duke and Mr. Guest 590

SCARBOROUGH GAS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Beckett and Mr. Compton Rickett 590

SEAFORTH AND SEFTON JUNCTION RAILWAY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Austin Taylor and Mr. Hall 590

SITTINGBOURNE DISTRICT GAS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Laurence Hardy and Mr. John Howard 590

SOUTH SHIELDS CORPORATION.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Robson and Sir Charles Palmer 590

SOUTH SHIELDS, SUNDERLAND, AND DISTRICT TRAMWAYS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Guthrie and Mr. Seely 590

SOUTH YORKSHIRE JOINT RAILWAYS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Wharton, Mr. Fielden, Mr. Fison, Sir Frederick Mappin, and Mr. Chapman 590

STOKE NEWINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bousfield and Captain Balfour 591

SUTTON DISTRICT WATER.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Keswick and Mr. Loder 591

THAMES CONSERVANCY.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland and Sir William Tomlinson 591

THAMES STEAMBOAT TRUST.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Alban Gibbs and Sir Fortescue Flannery 591

ULSTER AND CONNAUGHT LIGHT RAILWAYS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Harrington, Colonel Saunderson, Mr. James O'Kelly, Mr. Murnaghan, and Mr. Archdale 591

WALKER AND WALLSEND UNION GAS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Renwick and Mr Crawford Smith 591

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WELLINGBOROUGH AND DISTRICT TRAMROADS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Guthrie and Major Seely 591

WEST CUMBERLAND ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Helder, Colonel Bain, and Mr. Randles 591

WEST HAM CORPORATION.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ernest Gray and Mr. David Morgan 591

WINCHESTER WATER AND GAS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Beckett Faber, Mr. Myers, and Mr. Nicholson 591

WOLVERHAMPTON AND CANNOCK CHASE RAILWAY (EXTENSION OF TIME).—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Charles Shaw and Mr. Walford Green 591

WOOLWICH BOROUGH COUNCIL.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Lord Charles Beresford and Mr. Peel 592

CROYDON AND DISTRICT ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS.—Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 592

HARROW ROAD AND PADDINGTON TRAMWAYS.—Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 592

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAY (VARIOUS POWERS).—Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 592

SHEFFIELD CORPORATION.—Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 592

STRABANE AND LETTERKENNY RAILWAY.—Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 592

THAMES RIVER STEAMBOAT SERVICE.—Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 592

WIGAN CORPORATION TRAMWAYS.—Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 592

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—ARMY ORGANISATION.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment [23rd February] to main Question [17th February], "That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But we humbly regret that the organisation of the land forces is unsuited to the needs of the Empire, and that no proportionate gain in strength and efficiency has resulted from the recent increases in Military expenditure.'"—(*Mr. Beckett.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Wylie 593
Mr. Munro Ferguson (*Leith Burghs*) 595
Lt.-Colonel George Kemp (*Lancashire, Heywood*)... 597
Sir Edward Grey (*Northumberland, Berwick*) 610
Sir Charles Welby (*Nottinghamshire, Newark*) 620
Mr. Guest (*Plymouth*) 625

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."
—(*Mr. Churchill.*)

Put and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

PARISHES (UNITED, DIVIDED, ETC.).

Address for "Return of parishes divided and districts assigned to churches by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, under the provisions of the Church Building Acts and the Parish of Manchester Division Act, 1850."

"Of all districts and new parishes constituted by the same Commissioners under the New Parishes Acts."

"Of all districts or parishes assigned or constituted by the same Commissioners under The St. Leonard and St. Mary Magdalen Church Districts Act, 1868, or any other local Act."

"Of all the benefices, parishes or parts of parishes united by Order in Council, and of all benefices or parishes disunited by Order in Council."

"Of all chapelries, hamlets, and other parts of parishes severed from their mother parishes, and of extra-parochial places constituted separate benefices by order of the Council."

"And of all the chapelries, hamlets, or other parts of parishes severed from their mother parishes, and of extra-parochial places not constituted separate benefices but united to other parishes by Order of the Council."

"And, of curacies and chapelries which have been erected into perpetual curacies through the action of the governors of the bounty of Queen Anne, showing the full name of the chapel, and of the mother parish (if any), the county and diocese, and the date of the first augmentation by the governors, and the statutes or statute under which such augmentation was made in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 302, of Session 1897)."
—(*Mr. Talbot.*) 635

CHURCHES (CITY OF LONDON).—Address for "return of the number of churches in the city of London pulled down or condemned during the period from the 2nd day of August, 1894 to the 31st day of December, 1902, stating the gross sum realised by the sale of the site, the items of expenses such as solicitors' and auctioneers' charges, and the cost of removal of the dead buried within the church, and the net sum produced; what new churches have been built out of the proceeds in lieu of the churches pulled down, their situation, and cost; and what has been done with the parochial endowments (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 236, of Session 1895)."—(*Mr. Talbot.*)... 636

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.—Bill to amend The Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876, ordered to be brought in by Sir Frederick Banbury, Colonel Lockwood, and Mr. MacNeill

Cruelty to Animals Bill.—"To amend The Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 50.] 636

Adjourned at two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 24TH FEBRUARY, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

BARRY RAILWAY BILL [H.L.]; Birmingham District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Bournemouth Gas and Water Bill [H.L.]; British Gas Light Company (Norwich) Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Chatham and District Light Railways Bill [H.L.]; Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Derby Gas Bill [H.L.]; Didcot, Newbury, and Southampton Railway Bill [H.L.]; Dudley, Stourbridge, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Exeter Railway Bill [H.L.]; Faversham Gas Bill [H.L.]; Harrow and Stanmore Gas Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Tramways (Extensions) Bill [H.L.]; Hexham Gas Bill [H.L.]; Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Indiarubber, Guttapercha, and Telegraph Works Company Bill [H.L.]; Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Lima Railways Bill [H.L.]; London and North-Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill [H.L.]; Milford Docks Bill [H.L.]; Nantwich Gas Bill [H.L.]; North's Navigation Collieries Bill [H.L.]; Pelican and British Empire Life Office Bill [H.L.]; Plymouth and Stonehouse Gas Bill [H.L.]; Poole and District Electric Traction Bill [H.L.]; Port Talbot Railway and Docks Bill [H.L.]; Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage Bill [H.L.]; Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation Bill [H.L.]; South-Eastern and London, Chatham and Dover Railways Bill; [H.L.]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; South Wales Mineral Railway Bill [H.L.]; South-Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway Bill [H.L.]; Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Bill [H.L.]; Taff Vale Railway Bill [H.L.]; Wellington (Salop) Gas Bill [H.L.]; Western Trust Bill [H.L.]; Wirral Railway Bill [H.L.]—Presented; read 1^{a}; and referred to the Examiners 637

ALL SAINTS, POPLAR (RATE ABOLITION) BILL [H.L.]; Antrim, Down, Armagh, and Belfast Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Aston Manor Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Bangor Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Belfast Water Bill [H.L.]; Birmingham Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Bradford Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Brighton Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bury and District Joint Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity Bill [H.L.]; Exeter Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Frinton-on-Sea Sea Defences Bill [H.L.]; Harrogate Water Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Harbour Bill [H.L.]; King's College, London, Bill [H.L.]; London County Asylums (Receiving Houses) Bill [H.L.]; Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Mid Yorkshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Nantwich Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.]; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Old Bridewell Burying Ground Bill [H.L.]; Oldham Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Pontypridd Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Rickmansworth Gas Bill [H.L.]; Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.]; St. Philip's Chapel (Regent Street) Bill [H.L.]; Salford Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Scunthorpe Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Shepshed Urban

District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Shropshire, Worcestershire and East Denbighshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Somerset and District Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Southampton Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Sutton Coldfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Torquay Corporation Water Bill [H.L.]; West Bromwich Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Willesden Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Worthing Corporation (Tramways) Bill [H.L.]—Presented, and read 1ª 637

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 2936. Italy (Trade of Naples for the year 1902).
No. 2937. Western Pacific (Trade of Samoa for the year 1902).
No. 2938. Trade of Brazil (for the first half of the year 1902).
No. 2939. France (Agriculture of Consular District of Havre for the year 1902) 638

CENSUS, 1901 (ISLANDS IN THE BRITISH SEAS).—Isle of Man, Jersey, Guernsey, and adjacent Islands 638

CANCER.—Special Report on Cancer in Ireland, being a supplement to the Thirty-Eighth Annual Report of the Registrar General, Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 639

NEW BILL.

Marine Insurance Bill [H.L.]—A Bill for codifying the law relating to marine insurance was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 5.) 639

LIGHT LOAD LINE.—Moved that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire and report whether, and if so, to what extent, British ships are sent to sea in an unseaworthy condition by reason of their being insufficiently or improperly balasted, whether any amendment or amplification of the present law is desirable in connection therewith; if so, to what extent any such alteration of the law could be made equally applicable to foreign vessels—(*The Lord Wolverton*)—agreed to; and ordered accordingly.

The Lords following were named of the Committee.

E. Spencer.
V. Ridley.
L. Muskerry.
L. Wolverton.
L. Brassey.
L. Inverclyde.

The Committee to meet on Thursday next at Twelve o'clock and to appoint their own Chairman 639

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 24TH FEBRUARY, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.—The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means ... 639

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Transfer) Bill.—"To authorise the Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Company to acquire additional lands, and to transfer the undertaking and powers of that Company to the Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 639

Barnsley Corporation Water Bill.—"To amend the provisions of the Barnsley Order, 1902; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 640

Bath Corporation Water Bill.—"To empower the Corporation of Bath to construct additional waterworks; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 640

Beckenham Urban District Council Bill.—"To authorise the Urban District Council of Beckenham in the county of Kent to carry out street improvements; to construct and work tramways; and to make further provision in regard to the electricity undertaking of the Council; and for the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 640

Billingshurst and District Gas Bill.—"To incorporate the Billingshurst and District Gas Company and to enable that Company to supply with gas the parishes of Billingshurst, Wisborough Green, and other places in the county of Sussex," read the first time; to be read a second time 640

Blackheath and Greenwich District Electric Light Bill.—"To confirm an agreement for transfer to the Blackheath and Greenwich District Electric Light Company, Limited, of the undertaking of the Lewisham and District Electric Supply Company, Limited; and to confer further powers upon the Blackheath and Greenwich District Electric Light Company, Limited; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 640

Bridgwater Gas Bill—"For continuing the Bridgwater Gas Light Company; for regulating and increasing the capital of the Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 640

Bristol, London, and Southern Counties Railway Bill.—"For incorporating the Bristol, London, and Southern Counties Railway Company, and to authorise them to make and maintain railways in the counties of Bristol, Gloucester, Somerset, Wilts, and Southampton; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 641

Broadstairs Gas Bill.—"For conferring further powers on the Broadstairs Gas Company," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 641

Burgess Hill and St. John's Common Gas Bill.—"For Incorporating and conferring powers on the Burgess Hill and St. John's Common Gas Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 641

Castleblaney, Keady, and Armagh Railway (Extension of Time).—"To extend the time limited by the Kingscourt, Keady, and Armagh Railway Act, 1900, for the compulsory purchase of lands and for the construction of certain of the railways authorised by that Act; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 641

Central London Railway Bill.—"To empower the Central London Railway Company to construct new railways; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 641

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Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Company, to transfer to and vest in that Company the powers of the Edgware and Hampstead Railway Company, to authorise agreements with and the lease of the undertaking to the Underground Electric Railways Company of London, Limited, to transfer to and vest in the Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Company the undertaking and powers of the Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 641

Cheshire Lines Committee Bill.—"To enable the Cheshire Lines Committee to make new railways, to run over the Liverpool Overhead Railway, to acquire additional lands; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 642

City and North-East Suburban Electric Railway Bill.—"For incorporating the City and North-East Suburban Electric Railway Company, and for empowering them to construct railways from the City of London to Tottenham and Chequers Green, Southgate, and to Walthamstow, Epping Forest, and Waltham Abbey; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 642

City and South London Railway.—"For empowering the City and South London Railway Company to construct an extension of their underground railway to Euston in the County of London; and for transferring to that Company the powers of the City and Brixton Railway Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 642

Clapham Junction and Marble Arch Railway (No. 1) Bill.—"For incorporating the Clapham Junction and Marble Arch Railway Company; and for empowering them to construct a railway from the neighbourhood of Clapham Junction Railway Station to the Marble Arch in the County of London; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 642

Commercial Gas Bill.—"To make provision for the testing of Gas supplied by the Commercial Gas Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills .. 642

Cork Harbour Bill.—"To amend the Acts relating to the Cork Harbour Commissioners; to confer further powers on the Commissioners; and for further purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 643

Coventry and Arley Railway Bill.—"For making and maintaining Railways in the County of Warwick, to be called the Coventry and Arley Railway; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 643

Coventry Electric Tramways Bill.—"To authorise the Coventry Electric Tramways Company to construct additional tramways; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 643

Crystal Palace District Gas Bill.—"To confer further powers on the Crystal Palace District Gas Company with respect to the purchase and holding of lands, and to alter the provisions of the Acts of the Company with respect to the illuminating power of gas supplied by them and the testing of gas; and to change the name of the Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 643

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Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area) Bill.—"To amalgamate the Guinness Trust (Dublin) Fund with the Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area) Scheme; to vest the property of the Guinness (Dublin) Trustees in the trustees of the said scheme; to change the name of the last mentioned trustees; to confer further powers on them; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 643

Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill.—"To provide for the revision of the rent payable in respect of the lease of the undertaking of the Dublin and Kingstown Railway Company to the Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Company; to make other provision as to those two Companies; to enable the Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Company to make certain diversion railways and other works; to raise additional money; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 643

East Ardsley Gas Bill.—"For incorporating and conferring powers upon the East Ardsley Gas Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 644

East Ham Improvement Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Urban District Council for the District of East Ham, in the county of Essex," read the first time; to be read a second time 644

Ebbw Vale Water and Improvement Bill.—"To authorise the Urban District Council of Ebbw Vale to construct additional waterworks and to provide additional cemeteries, and to make further provision with regard to the supply of electricity and for the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 644

Erith Tramways and Improvement Bill.—"To authorise the Urban District Council of Erith in the County of Kent to construct and work tramways; to carry out street improvements; to transfer to the Council the powers within the district of the Commissioners of Sewers for the limits extending from Lombard's Wall to Gravesend Bridge; and to make further provision in regard to the supply of electricity; and for the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time... 644

Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Company; for the construction of a railway and other works and the acquisition of lands; and to make provision as to a bridge over the River Suir at Waterford; to empower the Great Western and Great Southern and Western Railway Companies to guarantee interest on the capital of the Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 644

Gas Light and Coke Company Bill.—"To enable the Gas Light and Coke Company to raise additional moneys, and to purchase, take, and hold lands; and for altering the standard price of gas, and redeeming capital; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 645

Gas Light and Coke Company's Acts Amendment Bill.—"To alter the standard price to be charged by the Gas Light and Coke Company for gas supplied; to alter the prescribed illuminating power and to make provisions with respect to the supply of burners; to make provisions with respect to a capital redemption fund; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 645

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Gateshead Corporation Bill.—"To make better provision for the health, good government, and improvement of the county borough of Gateshead; and for other purposes," read the first time, to be read a second time ... 645

Gorleston and Southtown Gas Bill.—"For conferring further powers on the Gorleston and Southtown Gas Company," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 645

Great Central Railway Bill.—"To authorise the construction of new railways and the acquisition of lands by the Great Central Railway Company in connection with their undertaking; the construction of new railways by the North Wales and Liverpool Railway Committee or the Company in connection with the undertaking of that Committee; the construction of a new railway by the Great Central and Midland Railway Companies in connection with their Shireoaks Railway; the diversion of footpaths by the Great Western and Great Central Railways' Joint Committee in connection with their undertaking; the establishment of a pension fund by the Great Central Company; the raising of further capital; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 645

Great Eastern Railway (No. 1) Bill.—"For conferring further powers on the Great Eastern Railway Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 646

Great Eastern Railway (No. 2) Bill.—"To authorise the Great Eastern Railway Company to widen their Cambridge and Norwich main line of railway over the River Wensum; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 646

Great Northern and City Railway Bill.—"To amend The Great Northern and City Railway Act, 1902, and to authorise the Great Northern and City Railway Company to raise additional capital for the purposes of their undertaking," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 646

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (New Lines and Extensions) Bill.—"To empower the Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Company to construct railways and works; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 646

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (Various Powers) Bill.—"To confer further powers on the Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 646

Great Northern Railway Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Great Northern Railway Company," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 646

Great Southern and Western Railway Bill. "To empower the Great Southern and Western Railway Company to construct certain new railways; to acquire additional lands; to enlarge and improve their station at Waterford; to confer further powers upon the Company; to enable them to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 647

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Great Western Railway Bill.—"For conferring further powers upon the Great Western Railway Company in respect of their own undertaking and upon that Company and the London and North Western Railway Company and the Midland Railway Company in respect of undertakings in which they are jointly interested, and upon the Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Company in respect of their undertaking; for amalgamating the Ely Valley Railway Company with the Great Western Railway Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 647

Great Western Railway (Pension Fund) Bill.—"To make further provision with respect to the Servants' Pension Fund of the Great Western Railway Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 647

Grindleford, Baslow, and Bakewell Railway Bill.—"For making railways in the county of Derby from the Midland Railway (Dore and Chinley Branch) at Grindleford to the Midland Railway (Derby and Manchester Branch) at Bakewell; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 647

Hainault Forest Bill.—"To authorise the acquisition of lands known as Lambourne Common, Chigwell Common, Fox Burrows Farm, Grange Hill Forest, and other lands in the county of Essex for the purposes of public open spaces," read the first time; to be read a second time 647

Hampton Court Gas Bill.—"To authorise the Hampton Court Gas Company to raise additional capital; to convert their existing capital; to enlarge their works; to amend their existing Acts; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 648

Highland and Invergarry and Fort Augustus Railway Companies (Substituted) Bill.—"To confirm an agreement between the Highland Railway Company and the Invergarry and Fort Augustus Railway Company; to enable the Highland Railway Company to erect and maintain an hotel at Dornoch, to apply their capital thereto; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 648

Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill.—"To empower the Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Company to construct a new dock with connecting railway and other works and entrance into the River Humber; to abandon the dock and work authorised by The Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Act, 1901; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 648

Hyde Corporation Bill.—"To make further and better provision with regard to the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the Borough of Hyde; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 648

Ipswich Gas Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Ipswich Gas Light Company," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 648

Kent Water Board Bill.—"For incorporating a Water Board, to consist of representatives of certain urban and rural district councils in the county of Kent, and for conferring upon such Board power to purchase certain portions of the undertakings of the companies of proprietors of the Kent waterworks and the Lambeth waterworks; and to supply water; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 648

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Lancashire and Yorkshire and London and North Western Railways (Steam Vessels) Bill.—" To extend and enlarge the powers of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company and the London and North Western Railway Company as to Steam Vessels; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 649

Leigh Corporation Bill.—" To make provision as to the water supply of the borough of Leigh and the urban district of Hindley; to enable the Corporation of Leigh to make new waterworks, tramways, and street improvements; and to make further provision for the health, local government, and improvement of the said borough; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 649

Llandrindod Wells Improvement Bill.—" To authorise the Urban District Council of Llandrindod Wells, in the county of Radnor, to purchase lands for the purposes of recreation grounds; to acquire certain springs; and to make further provision in regard to the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 649

London Building Acts (Amendment) Bill.—" To amend the Acts relating to buildings in London; to confer various powers on the London County Council; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 649

London County Council (Electric Supply) Bill.—" To make further provisions with respect to the purchase of electric undertakings by local authorities in the administrative county of London, and with respect to the supply of energy from stations of the London County Council; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 649

London County Council (General Powers) Bill.—" To empower the London County Council to purchase lands; to extend the time for completion of certain works and acquisition of lands; to empower the Metropolitan Borough Councils of Camberwell and Kensington to execute works and purchase lands; to make provision with respect to premises used for receiving horses for slaughter and carcasses of dead horses, and the removal and disposal of dead horses; to alter the method of testing gas employed by the South Metropolitan Gas Company; to make provision with respect to the drainage of Upper Norwood; to confer powers upon Metropolitan Borough Councils with respect to street markets, the fitting of premises of consumers of electricity, and the provision and maintenance of public clocks; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 650

London Hydraulic Power Bill.—" To enlarge the powers of the London Hydraulic Power Company as to the raising of capital; the supply of water; and the acquisition of a new site for their pumping station at Westminster; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 650

London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill. — " To authorise the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Company to construct new Railways and works; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 650

London United Tramways Bill.—"For conferring further powers on the London United Tramways (1901), Limited, for widening and altering roads and acquiring lands in the counties of Middlesex, Surrey, and London; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 650

Maidstone Gas Bill.—"To authorise the Maidstone Gas Company to convert their existing capital; to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 650

Market Drayton Gas Bill.—"For incorporating and conferring powers on the Market Drayton Gas Company," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills... 651

Merthyr Tydvil Urban District Council Bill.—"To empower the Urban District Council of Merthyr Tydvil to construct additional waterworks and a street improvement; and to make further and better provision for the good government, health, and improvement of the district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 651

Metropolitan District Railway (Works) Bill.—"To empower the Metropolitan District Railway Company to construct railways and works; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 651

Middlesbrough Corporation Bill.—"To make further provision with respect to the health and good government of the county borough of Middlesbrough and the collection of rates within the said borough; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 651

Midland and Belfast and Northern Counties Railways Bill.—"To provide for the vesting of the undertaking of the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway Company in the Midland Railway Company;" read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 651

Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Bill.—"To enable the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Company to construct a railway from Kingscourt to Castleblaney; to acquire additional lands; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 651

Midland Railway Bill.—"To confer additional powers upon the Midland Railway Company and upon the Norfolk and Suffolk Joint Railways Committee and upon the Midland and Great Northern Railways Joint Committee for the construction of works and the acquisition of lands; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 652

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill.—"To incorporate the Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Company; and for making railways and other works in the counties of Westmeath, Meath, and Louth; and to confer subscription and other powers on certain existing Railway Companies; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 652

Nantyglo and Blaina Water Bill.—"To authorise the Urban District Council of Nantyglo and Blaina to construct waterworks; and to supply water within the district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 652

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Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynamman Railway Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynamman Railway Company for the construction of railways; to authorise the Company to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 652

Nelson Corporation Bill.—"To extend the time for the construction of certain waterworks authorised by the Nelson Local Board Act, 1888; for protecting the water supply from pollution; and to make better provision in regard to the supply of water; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 652

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Bill.—"To transfer the electricity undertaking of the Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Company to the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Company, Limited; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 652

New Hunstanton Improvement Bill.—"To authorise the Urban District Council of New Hunstanton to acquire land for water and gas purposes; to construct an outfall sewer; and to make further provision in regard to the health, local government, improvement and finance, of the urban district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time ... 653

North-Eastern Railway Bill.—"To confer additional powers upon the North-Eastern Railway Company for the construction of new railways and other works and the acquisition of lands; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 653

North Middlesex Gas Bill.—"To extend the powers of the North Middlesex Gas Company," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 653

North-West London Railway Bill.—"For empowering the North-West London Railway Company to extend their underground railway to Victoria; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 653

Plymouth Corporation Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Corporation of Plymouth in regard to their tramway undertaking and the construction of street improvements; to transfer the Cottonian Museum to the Corporation; and to make further provision with regard to the borrowing of money by the Corporation and the repaying of their loans; and to the health, local government, and improvement of the borough; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 653

Scarborough Gas Bill.—"To authorise the Scarborough Gas Company to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 653

Seaforth and Sefton Junction Railway Bill.—"For making railways in the County of Lancaster; for connecting the Southport and Cheshire Lines Extension Railway with the Liverpool Overhead Railway; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 654

Sittingbourne District Gas Bill.—"To confer further powers on the Sittingbourne District Gas Company," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 654

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South Shields Corporation Bill.—"To enable the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the county borough of South Shields to construct tramways in the borough; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 654

South Shields, Sunderland and District Tramways Bill.—"To authorise the British Electric Traction Company, Limited, to construct tramways between South Shields and Sunderland and other places; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 654

South Yorkshire Joint Railways Bill.—"For enabling the North-Eastern, the Lancashire and Yorkshire, the Great Northern, the Midland, and the Great Central Railway Companies to construct or take over certain railways in South Yorkshire authorised by the Shireoaks, Laughton, and Maltby Railway Act, 1901, and the North-Eastern Railway Act, 1902; and to construct other railways and works; for constituting a Joint Committee; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 654

Stroud District and Cheltenham Tramways Bill.—"To incorporate the Stroud District and Cheltenham Tramways Company, and to empower that Company to make and maintain tramways in the county of Gloucester; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 654

Sutton District Water Bill.—"To authorise the Sutton District Water Company to construct additional waterworks, acquire lands, and raise further moneys; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 655

Thames Conservancy Bill.—"To confer further money and other powers on the Conservators of the River Thames for the deepening, widening, and improvement of its bed and channels as far as the Royal Albert Docks; to amend in various respects the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 655

Thames Steamboat Trust Bill.—"To incorporate trustees for the maintenance of a service of steamboats on the River Thames; to transfer to them the undertaking of the Thames Steamboat Company (1897), Limited; to provide for the transfer to them of certain piers on the River Thames; and for the guarantee by the Corporation of the City of London, the London County Council, and the Conservators of the River Thames of interest on moneys to be borrowed by the trustees; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 655

Ulster and Connaught Light Railways Bill.—"To authorise the construction of a railway from Maguiresbridge to Bawnboy Road, in the counties of Fermanagh and Cavan; and of certain railways at Arigno and Dromod, in the counties of Roscommon and Leitrim; and the working of such railways and the Clogher Valley and Cavan and Leitrim Railways and other railways in connection therewith as one railway; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 655

Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Bill.—"To empower the Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Company to enlarge and extend their existing gasworks at Walker; and to construct a short line of railway or siding into their said gasworks; to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 655

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Watford and Edgware Railway Bill.—"For incorporating the Watford and Edgware Railway Company, and for empowering them to construct a railway from Watford to Edgware; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 656

Wellingborough and District Tramroads Bill.—"To empower the British Electric Traction Company (Limited) to construct a new tramroad in the county of Northampton; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 656

West Cumberland Electric Tramways Bill.—"To extend the periods for the commencement of the construction and for the completion of the tramways, tramroads, and other works, and for the taking of lands authorised by the West Cumberland Electric Tramways Act, 1901; to extend the area within which the West Cumberland Electric Tramways Company may supply electricity, and to confer on that Company further and additional powers with regard to such supply; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 656

Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill.—"To constitute and incorporate a Joint Board, consisting of representatives of the Urban District Councils of Abercarn, Abertillery, Ebbw Vale, Nantyglo, and Blaina and Risca, all in the county of Monmouth; and to authorise the Board to construct main trunk sewers and other works for the disposal of the sewage of such districts; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 656

West Ham Corporation Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the county borough of West Ham, and to make further provision for the good government of that Borough; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 656

West Sussex Water Bill.—"To incorporate the West Sussex Water Company, and to enable the Company to supply water within the parish of Pulborough and certain other parishes in the county of Sussex," read the first time; to be read a second time 657

Winchester Water and Gas Bill.—"For conferring further powers upon the Winchester Water and Gas Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 657

Wolverhampton and Cannock Chase Railway (Extension of Time) Bill.—"To extend the time for the compulsory purchase of lands and for the construction and completion of the Wolverhampton and Cannock Chase Railway; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 657

Wood Green Urban District Council Bill.—"To enable the Urban District Council of Wood Green to acquire part of Wood Green Common for the purposes of a dust destructor; and to make further provision with regard to the electric light undertaking of the Council; and for the improvement, health, and local government of the district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 657

Woolwich Borough Council Bill.—"To authorise the Mayor, Aldermen, and Councillors of the metropolitan borough of Woolwich to supply electrical energy in bulk to the Urban District Council of Foots Cray; to confer further powers upon the said Mayor, Aldermen, and Councillors; and to make further provision with respect to markets in the borough of Woolwich; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 657

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from St. Andrews and St. Leonards; Holm; Ruthven; Erskine; Galashiels; Barry; Bervie; and Dumbarton; to lie upon the Table 658

LAND TRANSFER ACT, 1897.—Petition from Middlesex, for inquiry into the compulsory system of registration; to lie upon the Table 658

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Blackpool; Salford; and Stoke Newington; to lie upon the Table ... 658

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 23rd February; *Mr. Austen Chamberlain*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 31.] 658

NAVY (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT).—Copy presented, of the Appropriation Account of the Navy for 1901–1902, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon, and upon the Store accounts of the Navy [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 32.] 658

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2936 to 2939 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 658

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION ACT, 1889.—Copy presented, of Minute sanctioning the Subjects to be taught under Clause 8 of the Act, for the County of Cardigan (Second Minute), dated 14th November, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 658

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION ACT, 1889.—Copy presented, of Minute sanctioning the subjects to be taught under Clause 8 of the Act, for the County of Rutland (Fifth Minute), dated 14th November, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 658

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION ACT, 1889.—Copy presented, of Minute sanctioning the Subjects to be taught under Clause 8 of the Act, for the County of Devon (Eighth Minute), dated 27th November, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 659

CENSUS, 1901.—Copy presented, of Census, 1901 (Islands in the British Seas) (Isle of Man, Jersey, and Guernsey, and adjacent Islands) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 659

CIVIL SERVICE (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1902–3).—Estimate presented, of the further sums required to be voted for the service of the year ending 31st March, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 33.] 659

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA (TAXATION OF NATIVES).—Address for "Return showing the rates of Taxation now paid by the Natives in the several parts of British South Africa."—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*) 659

BREWERS' LICENCES.

Return ordered, "of accounts of the number of persons in each of the several collections of the United Kingdom licensed as brewers for sale, *i.e.* common brewers, victuallers, retailers of beer to be drunk on the

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premises, retailers of beer not to be drunk on the premises, and brewers of beer not for sale, particularising each class in each collection; and of the number of licences issued to victuallers and retailers of beer to be drunk on the premises and not to be drunk on the premises; and stating also the quantities of malt, unmalted corn, rice, etc., sugar, including its equivalent of syrups, etc., hops and hop substitutes, used by brewers of beer for sale, and of malt and sugar used by brewers not for sale, from the 1st day of October, 1901, to the 30th day of September, 1902."

"Of the amount of Licence Duty paid and Beer Duty charged from the 1st day of October, 1901, to the 30th day of September, 1902, distinguishing brewers for sale from other brewers."

"Of the number of brewers for sale (i.) who use malt and hops, or hop substitutes only, and (ii.) who use malt with substitutes for same and hops or hop substitutes paying for licences, from the 1st day of October, 1901, to the 30th day of September, 1902, separating them into classes, according to the number of barrels of beer charged with duty calculated at 1·055 degrees gravity, viz.: under 1,000 barrels; 1,000 and under 10,000; 10,000 and under 20,000; 20,000 and under 30,000; 30,000 and under 50,000; 50,000 and under 100,000; 100,000 and under 150,000; 150,000 and under 200,000; 200,000 and under 250,000; 250,000 and under 300,000; 300,000 and under 350,000; 350,000 and under 400,000; 400,000 and under 450,000; 450,000 and under 500,000; 500,000 and under 600,000; 600,000 and under 700,000; 700,000 and under 800,000; 800,000 and under 900,000; 900,000 and under 1,000,000; 1,000,000 and under 1,500,000; 1,500,000 and under 2,000,000; 2,000,000 barrels and over; showing separately, in each class, the quantities of malt, unmalted corn, rice, etc., sugar, including its equivalent of syrups, etc., hops and hop substitutes used; and stating also the number of bulk barrels of beer produced, and the amount of Licence Duty paid and Beer Duty charged in each class:"

"And, of the number of barrels of beer exported from the United Kingdom, and the declared value thereof, and where exported to, from the 1st day of October, 1901, to the 30th day of September, 1902, distinguishing England, Scotland, and Ireland (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 71, of Session 1902)."—(*Mr. Hayes Fisher*) 659

PAUPERISM (ENGLAND AND WALES) (MONTHLY STATEMENTS).—Return ordered, "of Statements for each month of the year 1903 of the number of Paupers (except Lunatics in County and Borough Asylums, Registered Hospitals, and Licensed Houses, and Vagrants), in receipt of relief in England and Wales (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 121, of Session 1902)."—(*Mr. Grant Lawson.*)... 660

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

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NEWTON ABBOT POST OFFICE—INCREASED SALARY FOR STAFF.—Question, Mr. Seale-Hayne (Devonshire, Ashburton); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 662

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES OF DUBLIN BOOKMAKERS.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 662

SOUTH AFRICA—BEER DUTY IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Mr. Eugene Wason (Clackmannan and Kinross); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain ... 663

SOUTH AFRICA—LOSS ON SALE OF BLOCKHOUSES.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 663

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LAND PURCHASE IN COUNTY SLIGO—LAND COMMISSION ADVANCES.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.) ; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 673

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MARINE WORKS IN IRELAND.—Questions, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.) and Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, N.) ; Answers, Mr. Wyndham 674

UNITED IRISH LEAGUE—INNISCÂRRA MEETING—Question, Mr. Sheehan (Cork Co., Mid) ; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 675

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ALLEGED FORGED WILL—CASE OF THOMAS O'KEEFE.—Question, Mr. William Abraham (Cork Co., N.E.) ; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 676

IRISH LOCAL TAXATION FUND—EXPENSES OF MIDWIVES.—Questions, Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.) ; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 677

AFFORESTRY IN IRELAND.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh, Mr. Boland, and Captain Donelan ; Answers, Mr. Hanbury 677

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill ; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 678

REFORM OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE.—Questions, Mr. Henry Hobhouse and Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) ; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour ... 679

NEW BILLS.

Incest Bill—"To provide for the punishment of Incest," presented by Colonel Lockwood ; supported by Sir John Kennaway and Mr. Henry J. Wilson ; to be read a second time upon Friday next, and to be printed. [Bill 51]... 680

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Wales) Bill.—"To enable owners and occupiers in Wales and Monmouthshire to have effectual control over the Liquor Traffic," presented by Mr. Herbert Roberts ; supported by Sir Alfred Thomas, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), Mr. Samuel Evans, and Mr. William Jones ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 52.] 680

Prevention of Pollution of Rivers and Streams Bill.—"To make further and amended provisions to prevent the Pollution of Rivers and Streams," presented by Sir Francis Sharp Powell ; supported by Mr. Wilson-Todd, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Sir John Dorington, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Brigg, Sir John Brunner, and Sir Walter Foster ; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 17th March, and to be printed. [Bill 53] 681

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Public Health Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the qualification and tenure of office of Medical Officers of Health and Inspectors, and to make further provisions relating to superannuation allowances for such Officers and Inspectors; and for other purposes," presented by Sir Francis Sharp Powell; supported by Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Talbot, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. Cripps, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, Sir Michael Foster, and Sir John Batty Tuke; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 17th March, and to be printed. [Bill 54] 681

Trade Unions and Trade Disputes Bill.—"To legalise the peaceful conduct of Trade disputes, and to alter the Law affecting the liability of trade union funds," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Bell and Mr. M'Kenna; to be read a second time upon Friday next, and to be printed. [Bill 55] 681

Local Government (Ireland) Bill.—"To amend the Local Government (Ireland) Acts," presented by Mr. Duffy; supported by Mr. Reddy, Mr. Conor O'Kelly, and Mr. Roche; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 56] 681

Aged Pensioners (No. 2) Bill.—"To provide Pensions for the aged deserving poor," presented by Mr. Samuel Roberts; to be read a second time Friday, 22nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 57] 681

Bank Holidays (Ireland) Bill.—"To make provision for a Bank Holiday in Ireland on the Seventeenth day of every March," presented by Mr. O'Mara, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Dillon, Mr. W. Russell, and Mr. Hemphill; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 58] 681

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS)—ARMY ORGANISATION.—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [23rd February] to Main Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'but we humbly regret that the organisation of the land forces is unsuited to the needs of the Empire, and that no proportionate gain in strength and efficiency has resulted from the recent increases in military expenditure.'"—(*Mr. Beckett.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham) 682
Major Rosch (Essex, Chelmsford) 700
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 702
The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 716

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Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.) 726
Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth) 733
Sir J. Dickson Poynder (Wiltshire, Chippenham)... 740

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till the Evening Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

King's Speech (Motion for an Address)—Army Organisation.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment [23rd February] to Main Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But we humbly regret that the organisation of the land forces is unsuited to the needs of the Empire, and that no proportionate gain in strength and efficiency has resulted from the recent increases in military expenditure.'" (*Mr. Beckett.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Sir J. Dickson Poynder 748
Mr. Griffith Boscawen (Kent, Tunbridge) 751
Captain Sinclair (Forfarshire) 757
Lord Alwyne Compton (Bedfordshire, Biggleswade) 763
Mr. Asquith (Fifeshire, E.) 765
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 775

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 145; Noes, 261. (Division List No. 7.)

Main Question again proposed.

Debate arising; and, it being after Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjourned at five Minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 25th FEBRUARY, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

The Chairman of Ways and Means.—The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means ... 793

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UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS

Dover Corporation Bill.—"To authorise the Corporation of Dover to borrow money for the purchase of the undertaking of the Dover Electricity Supply Company, Limited; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 793

Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill.—"To empower the Corporation of Kingston-upon-Hull to make certain street works and bridges; to construct additional tramways; and to confer further powers on them in regard to streets, buildings, and sewers, and the health, local government, and improvement of the city; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 793

Stoke Newington Borough Council Bill.—"To authorise agreements between the Corporation of the Metropolitan Boroughs of Stoke Newington, Hackney, and Islington with respect to the supply of electricity in bulk, and to confer powers upon the Corporation of Stoke Newington with respect to the purchase of lands; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 793

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Leith; Inverchaolain; and Fearn; to lie upon the Table 793

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.—Petition from Hackney, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 793

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INEBRIATES ACTS (INSPECTOR'S REPORT).—Copy presented, of Supplement to the Report of the Inspector, under the Inebriates Acts, for the year 1901, being a collection of British, Colonial, and Foreign Statutes relating to the penal and reformatory treatment of Habitual Inebriates [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 794

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES (ELECTORS, ETC.) (UNITED KINGDOM).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 18th February; *Sir Charles Dilke*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 34] 794

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF SOUTHAMPTON).—Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of Southampton altering certain Polling Districts in the Basingstoke Parliamentary Division [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 794

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF LANCASTER).—Copy presented, of Order, dated 6th November, 1902, made by the County Council of the County Palatine of Lancaster altering certain Polling Districts in the Accrington Parliamentary Division [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 794

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF LANCASTER).—Copy presented, of Order, dated 5th February, 1903, made by the County Council of the County Palatine of Lancaster, altering certain Polling Districts in the Accrington Parliamentary Division [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 794

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX).—Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of the County of Middlesex altering certain Polling Districts in the county [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 794

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NEW SOUTH WALES (WOMEN'S FRANCHISE ACT, 1902).—Copy presented, of The Women's Franchise Act, 1902 (New South Wales) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 794

NEW SOUTH WALES (PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1902). —Copy presented, of the Parliamentary Elections (Amendment) Act, 1902 (New South Wales) [by Act]; to lie upon the table, and to be printed. [No. 35] 795

DUCHY OF CORNWALL.—Account presented, of the Receipts and Disbursements of the Duchy of Cornwall for the year ended 31st December, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [Bill 36] 795

TREATY SERIES (No. 3, 1903).—Copy presented, of Accession of the Empire of Korea to the Convention, signed at Geneva on the 22nd August, 1864, for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded in Armies in the Field, 8th January, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 795

Papers laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House:—

BANK OF ENGLAND.—Accounts of Exchequer Bills and other Government Securities purchased, and of the Amount of Balances of Sums issued for the payment of Dividends, etc., for the year ending 5th January, 1903 [by Act] to be printed. [No. 37.]

LAND TRANSFER RULES.—Copy of Rules made in pursuance of the Land Transfer Act, 1875, dated 10th February, 1903 [by Act.] ... ...

POST OFFICE (Contract for Accelerated Mail Service to and from Ireland, *via* Carlisle, Stranraer, and Larne).—Copy ordered, "of Contract, dated 8th day of November, 1902, with the Glasgow and South Western Railway Company, the Portpatrick and Wigtownshire Joint Committee, and the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway Company, for an Accelerated Mail Service to and from Ireland *via* Carlisle, Stranraer, and Larne."—(*Mr. Hayes Fisher*) 795

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

IRISH LIGHTS BOARD.—Question, Mr. Mooney (Dublin County, S.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 795

IRELAND—PAYMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUDITORS.—Question, Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham... 796

PAY OF BRITISH TROOPS IN INDIA—VIEWS OF INDIAN COUNCIL.—Question, Sir Chas. Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Lord George Hamilton 797

POLICE SUPERANNUATION IN SCOTLAND.—Question, Mr. Wylie (Dumbartonshire); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 797

VACCINATION IN SCOTLAND—ENGLISH AND SCOTCH REGULATIONS.—Question, Sir John Leng (Dundee); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 797

SHEEP SCAB—COMPULSORY DIPPING.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. Hanbury 798

PORTSMOUTH DOCKYARD—STORAGE OF STEAM COAL UNDER WATER.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 798

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COMPENSATION FOR TELEGRAPH ERRORS—CASE OF D. O'SULLIVAN.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain ... 799

R.A.M.C. MILITIA.—Question, Capt. Jessel (St. Pancras, S.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 799

POLLUTION OF FISH BY SEWAGE.—Question, Sir Joseph Dimsdale (London); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 800

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

SOUTH AFRICAN REBELS.—Question, Col. Nolan (Galway, N.); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 800

PUBLICANS' LICENCES.—Question, Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee), Mr. James Lowther (Kent, Thanet), Col. Nolan; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 800

SWINE FEVER MOVEMENT ORDERS.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Hanbury, Preston) 802

POSTMEN'S PROMOTION IN THE MANCHESTER POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Schwann (Manchester, H.); Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 803

TELEPHONES IN IRISH POST OFFICES.—Question, Mr. McGovern (Cavan, W.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 803

STANDING ORDERS.—Ordered, That the Select Committee on Standing Orders do consist of Thirteen Members:—Sir John Brunner, Sir William Coddington, Mr. John Edward Ellis, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Halsey, Mr. Humphreys-Owen, Mr. James Lowther, Sir James Rankin, Mr. William Redmond, Sir Mark M'Taggart Stewart, Mr. Whitmore, and Mr. Wodehouse were accordingly nominated Members of the Committee.—(*Mr. Halsey.*) 804

SELECTION.—Ordered, that the Committee of Selection do consist of Eleven Members:—Mr. Blake, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Sir John Dorington, Sir William Hart Dyke, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. M'Kenna, Sir Mark M'Taggart Stuart, Mr, Wharton, Mr. Wodehouse, and the Chairman of the Select Committee on Standing Orders were accordingly nominated Members of the Committee.—(*Mr. Halsey.*) 804

NEW BILLS.

Plumbers' Registration Bill.—"To provide for the Registration of Plumbers," presented by Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland; supported by Sir James Rankin, Sir John Rolleston, Colonel Nolan, Dr. Farquharson, and Mr. Nannetti; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 59] 804

Prevention of Disease (Fruit Trees) Bill.—"To provide for the eradication of disease and of injurious insects amongst fruit trees in nursery gardens," presented by Sir James Rankin; supported by Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Mr. Arkwright, and Captain Percy Clive; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th May, and to be printed. [Bill 60] 805

Tramways (Hours of Labour) Bill.—"To restrict the hours of labour of tramway workers in the United Kingdom," presented by Mr. Nannetti; supported by Mr. Harrington, Mr. Field, Mr. Joyce, Mr. Bell, Mr. Crean, Mr. Sloan, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Mooney, Mr. Sheehan, and Mr. John Burns; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 61] 805

School Board (Electorate) Scotland Bill.—"To admit to the School Board Electorate of Scotland persons entitled to vote for the County Council Election," presented by Mr. Weir; supported by Mr. Leveson-Gower, Mr. Nicol, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Bignold, Mr. Harmsworth, and Mr. Caldwell; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 62] 805

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [17th February],

"That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Main Question again proposed.

THE IRISH LAND CONFERENCE.

Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 805
Mr. Condon (*Tipperary, E.*) 820

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words: 'And we humbly represent to your Majesty that it is in the highest interest of the State that advantage should be taken of the unexampled opportunity created by the Land Conference agreement for putting an end to agrarian troubles and conflicts between classes in Ireland by giving the fullest and most generous effect to the Land Conference Report in the Irish land-purchase proposals announced in the Speech from the Throne." (*Mr. John Redmond.*)

The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Wyndham, Dover*)... 821
Mr. John Morley (*Montrose Burgh*) 826
Col. Saunderson (*Armagh, N.*) 831
Mr. Haldane (*Haddingtonshire*) 834
Mr. William O'Brien (*Cork*) 839
Mr. John Gordon (*Londonderry, S.*) 843
Sir Edward Grey (*Northumberland, Berwick*) 847
Mr. T. W. Russell (*Tyrone, S.*) 852
Mr. John Burns (*Battersea*) 857
Mr. Harrington (*Dublin, Harbour*) 860
Mr. Sharpe (*Kensington, N.*) 862
Mr. Hugh Law (*Donegal, W.*) 863

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

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THE EXCLUSION OF CANADIAN CATTLE.

Mr. Price (Norfolk, E.) 864
Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.) 869

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question to add the words 'And we humbly represent to your Majesty that the absence of cattle disease in the Dominion of Canada and the requirements of cattle feeders in this country justify the repeal of the law which excludes Canadian store cattle from our markets.'"—(*Mr. Price.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Spear (Devonshire, Tavistock) 872
Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland) 873

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—THE EXCLUSION OF CANADIAN CATTLE.—Order read, for resuming adjourned Debate on Amendment [25th February] to Main Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Which Amendment was:—

"At the end of the question to add the words, 'And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the absence of cattle disease in the Dominion of Canada and the requirements of cattle feeders in this country justify the repeal of the law which excludes Canadian store cattle from our markets.'"—(*Mr. Price.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Cathcart Wason 875
Mr. Llewellyn (Somersetshire, N.)... 877
Mr. Eugene Wason (Clackmannan and Kinross) 878
Mr. Gardner (Berkshire, Wokingham) 879
Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.) 880
Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee) 881
Mr. Tennant (Berwickshire) 882
The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Hanbury, Preston) ... 883
Mr. George Whiteley (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) 889
Sir Edward Strachey (Somersetshire, S.) 893
Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester) 896
Mr. Crombie (Kincardineshire) 898
Mr. Murnaghan (Tyrone, Mid.) 900

Mr. Weir (Ross, Cromarty) 901
Mr, Levy (Leicestershire, Loughborough) 902
Mr. Cawley (Lancashire, Prestwich) 904
Mr. Sheehan (Cork Co., Mid.) 904

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 38 ; Noes, 190. (Division List No. 8.)

Main Question again proposed.

Debate arising.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) moved the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Sir Howard Vincent*).

Put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

COAL EXPORTS, ETC.—Return ordered, "giving, for the year 1902, the export of coal from each port in the United Kingdom to each country abroad, together with summary statements showing the export of coal in every period of three months from the principal districts of the United Kingdom to the principal groups of foreign countries ; and also showing the quantity of coal shipped at each port in the United Kingdom for ships' use on foreign voyages during the like periods (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 138, of Session 1902)."—(*Mr. David Thomas*) 908

Adjourned at ten minutes before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS : THURSDAY, 26TH FEBRUARY, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Hastings Harbour District Railway Bill [H.L.].—Presented ; read 1^a, and referred to the Examiners 909

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INEBRIATES ACTS.—Supplement to the report of the inspector under the Inebriates Acts for the year 1901, being a collection of British, Colonial, and Foreign Statutes relating to the penal and reformatory treatment of habitual inebriates 909

TREATY SERIES, No. 3 (1903).—Accession of the Empire of Kona to the Convention signed at Geneva, 22nd August, 1864, for the amelioration of the condition of the wounded in armies in the field 909

SOUTH AFRICA.—Further correspondence relating to affairs in South Africa (in continuation of [Cd. 1163.], July 1902).

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 909

LAND TRANSFER (STATUTORY RULES AND ORDERS).—Rules, dated 10th February, 1903 909

BANK OF ENGLAND.—Annual accounts of Exchequer Bills and other Government Securities purchased for the year ended 5th January, 1903 909

DUCHY OF CORNWALL.—Account of the receipts and disbursements of the Duchy of Cornwall in the year ended 31st December 1902 909

POLLING DISTRICTS.—Orders made by the County Council of—The county of Middlesex ; the county of Lancaster (two orders) ; the county of Southampton ; altering certain polling districts in the said counties ... 909

NEW SOUTH WALES.—Parliamentary Elections (Amendment) Act, 1902 ; Women's Franchise Act, 1902. [No. 54.]

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act) and ordered to lie on the Table ... 910

LIGHT LOAD LINE.—The Lord Shand added to the Select Committee 910

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS : THURSDAY, 26TH FEBRUARY, 1903.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.—The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means ... 910

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour : From Kirkintilloch ; Kirkcolm ; Northmadine ; Botriphine ; Leswalt ; Rothes ; and, Greenock ; to lie upon the Table 910

SALE AND USE OF TOBACCO AMONG JUVENILES.—Petition from Chorley, for legislation ; to lie upon the Table 910

BRITISH MUSEUM.—Petition of the Trustees of the British Museum [King's Recommendation signified], for grant in aid ; to lie upon the Table ... 910

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INEBRIATES ACTS 1879 TO 1899 (RULES FOR RETREATS) (IRELAND).—Return [presented 17th February] to be printed. [No. 38.] 910

ARTHUR ALFRED LYNCH.—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 23rd February ; *Sir Alexander Acland-Hood*] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 39.] 910

BREWERS' LICENCES.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 24th February ; *Mr. Hayes Fisher*] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 40.] 911

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ALIENS IN BRITISH PRISONS.—Question, Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 927

STRAY DOGS IN THE METROPOLIS.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 927

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IRISH POSTAL SERVICE — ALLOWANCES TO INSPECTING TELEGRAPHISTS.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 935

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LONDON EDUCATION BILL. — Question, Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 936

LONDON AND GLOBE FINANCE CORPORATION.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 936

MINISTERS AS COMPANY DIRECTORS.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill: Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 937

NATIONAL EXPENDITURE COMMITTEE. — Question, Mr. Winston Churchill; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 937

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NEW BILLS.

Merchandise Marks Bills.—"To amend the Sixteenth Section of the Merchandise Marks Act, 1887, and to restrain the False Marking of Foreign Goods as British made," presented by Sir Howard Vincent; supported by Major Rasch, Colonel Brookfield, Sir Henry Seton-Karr, and Mr. Field; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 63] 938

Public Trustee Bill.—"For the appointment of a Public Trustee and Executor," presented by Sir Howard Vincent; supported by Mr. H. D. Greene, Mr. Howard, and Colonel Tufnell; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 64] 938

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KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR ADDRESS)—IMMIGRATION OF DESTITUTE ALIENS.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Question again proposed.

Sir Howard Vincent (*Sheffield, Central*) ... 938
Mr. Forde Ridley (*Bethnal Green, S. W.*) ... 950

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

"And we humbly represent to your Majesty that the great increase of late in the immigration of destitute aliens into the East End of London, coupled with the considerable numbers of such aliens who become a charge on the Criminal Law of this country, constitute a grave national danger, seriously affecting the employment, the welfare, and the housing of the working classes, and calls, therefore, for the immediate fulfilment of the repeated promises of legislation upon the subject on behalf of His Majesty's Government, and notably of that of 10th February, 1897, declaring that not only individual members, but the Government as a whole, were pledged to some legislation on the subject."—(*Sir Howard Vincent.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds Central*) 956
Mr. Boyce (*Aberdeen, S.*) ... 956
Mr. Stuart Samuel (*Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel*) ... 961
Mr. James Lowther (*Kent, Thanet*) ... 963
Mr. Norman (*Wolverhampton, S.*) ... 964
Mr. Stock (*Liverpool, Walton*) ... 965
Mr. Sydney Buxton (*Tower Hamlets, Poplar*) ... 965
Sir J. Blundell Maple (*Camberwell, Dulwich*) ... 969
Sir George Bartley (*Islington, N.*) ... 970
Mr. Claude Hay (*Shoreditch, Hoxton*) ... 971
Sir Joseph Leese (*Lancashire, Accrington*) ... 975
The Secretary to the Board of Trade (*Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars*) ... 975

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

MILITARY EXPENDITURE OF THE INDIAN EMPIRE.

Mr. Caine (*Cornwall, Camborne*) ... 977
Mr. Herbert Roberts (*Denbighshire, W.*) ... 983

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

"And, having regard to the great poverty of the Indian people, and to the fact that 30,000 troops of the Indian Army have been used in other parts of the world in which India has no direct or substantial interest, we humbly express our regret that your Majesty's Speech contains no recommendation for the reduction of the military expenditure of the Indian Empire."—(*Mr. Caine.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Major Evans Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) 989
The Secretary of State for India (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing) 990

Question put, and negatived.

Main Question again proposed.

RAILWAY RATES IN IRELAND.

Mr. O'Mara (Kilkenny, S.) 996
Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.) 997

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the railway charges for agricultural and other produce in Ireland are excessive, and that the general management of Irish railways is such as to require immediate inquiry and reform."—(*Mr. O'Mara.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 999
Mr. Hemphill (Tyrone, N.) 1001
Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green) 1002
Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.) 1003

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."

To be presented by Privy Councillors and Members of His Majesty's Household.

SUPPLY.—Resolved, that this House will, upon Monday next, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to His Majesty.

Ordered, That the Civil Services Supplementary Estimates, 1902–1903, presented to this House on the 24th day of this instant February, be referred to the Committee of Supply.—(*Mr. Hayes Fisher.*) 1004

WAYS AND MEANS.—Resolved, That this House will, upon Monday next, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to His Majesty."—(*Mr. Hayes Fisher.*)

And, there being no further business set down for the Afternoon Sitting, Mr. Speaker left the Chair until the Evening Sitting 1004

EVENING SITTING.

Bank Holidays (Ireland) Bill.—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [25th February], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question put and agreed to; Bill read a second time, and Committed for To-morrow... 1004

Light Locomotives (Ireland) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow 1004

Adjourned at two minutes after Nine o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—

Scottish American Mortgage Company.
Life Association of Scotland.
Fife Electric Power.

Also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—

Lanarkshire and Dumbartonshire Railway.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1005

Life Assurance of Scotland Bill [H.L.]; North Cheshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth and District Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Presented; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 1005

Fifeshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Liverpool University Bill [H.L.]; Maryport Harbour Bill [H.L.].—Presented, and read 1ª 1005

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EXPLOSIVES.—Explosion at the Factory of Messrs. Curtis and Harvey, Limited, at Lower Hope Point, near Cliffe, Kent.

Report to the right hon. the Secretary of State for the Home Department, by Major A. Cooper-Key, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, on the circumstances attending an explosion of partly mixed cordite paste, which occurred at the factory of Messrs. Curtis and Harvey, Limited, at Lower Hope Point, near Cliffe, Kent, on 15th December, 1902.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 1005

BANK OF ENGLAND.—Applications made by the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Governor of the Bank of England for advances to Government, authorised by Parliament, from 5th January, 1902, to 5th January, 1903. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table. 1006

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY, 1903.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

SUBSTITUTED BILLS PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in respect of the following Bills introduced pursuant to the provisions of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, and which the Chairman of Ways and Means had directed to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with, viz., Fife Electric Power Company; Life Association of Scotland; Scottish-American Mortgage Company, Limited 1006

SUBSTITUTED BILLS PETITION (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, introduced pursuant to the provisions of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz., Lanarkshire and Dumbartonshire Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1006

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: From Urr; Thurso; Latheron; Cadder; Reay; and Kilrenny; to lie upon the Table 1006

PIRTHIPAL.—Petition of Pirthipal, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table 1007

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petition from Gorton, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1007

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EXPLOSIONS.—(Explosion at the factory of Messrs. Curtis and Harvey, Limited, at Lower Hope Point, near Cliffe, Kent.)

Copy presented, of Report by Major A. Cooper-Key, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on the circumstances attending an explosion which occurred at the factory of Messrs. Curtis and Harvey, Limited, at Lower Hope Point, near Cliffe, Kent, on the 15th December, 1902 [by Command]: to lie upon the Table 1007

PAUPERISM (ENGLAND AND WALES) (MONTHLY STATEMENTS).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 24th February; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 41] 1007

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1902–3).—Copy presented, of Supplementary Estimate of the further amount required during the year ending 31st March, 1903, to meet expenditure in excess of that provided for in the original Army Estimates for the year, for the pay, etc., of the Army [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 42] 1007

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1903–4.—Copy presented, of Army Estimates of effective and non-effective services for the year ending 31st March, 1904 [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 43] 1007

Army (Ordnance Factories, 1903–4).—Copy presented, of the sum required for the year ending 31st March, 1904, to defray the expense of the Ordnance Factories [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 44] 1007

Papers laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House:

Irish Land Commission (Account).—Copy of Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General upon the Account of the Irish Land Commission for the year ended 31st March, 1902 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 45.]

Bank of England.—Copy of all applications made by the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank of England for advances to Government authorised by Parliament, from 5th January, 1902, to 5th January, 1903 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 46] 1008

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Labourers' Cottages in the North Dublin Rural District.—Question, Mr. Clancy (Dublin Co., N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1008

Alleged Grievances of Customs Boatmen—Question, Mr. Charles McArthur (Liverpool, Exchange); Answer, Mr. Hayes Fisher 1009

Customs Preventive Officers—Promotions from Boatmen.—Question, Mr. Charles McArthur; Answer, Mr. Hayes Fisher... 1009

Smallpox in England and Wales.—Question, Sir Michael Foster (London University); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1009

reat Northern Railway of Ireland—Obstruction at Strabane Station.—Question, Mr. Hemphill (Tyrone, N.); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour ... 1010

Marine Works (Ireland) Act—Kinvara Harbour.—Question, Mr. Duffy (Galway, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1010

Explosion of Gun Cotton at Woolwich—Origin of Manufacture.—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick ... 1011

Property and Income Tax in Scotland—Dates of Collection.—Question, Sir John Leng (Dundee); Answer, Mr. Hayes Fisher 1011

Outdoor Relief (Friendly Societies) Bill.—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Edward Strachey.*)

The President of the Local Government Board (*Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.*) 1012
Sir George Bartley (*Islington, N.* 1014
Colonel Blundell (*Lancashire, Ince*) 1015
Mr. Shackleton (*Lancashire, Clitheroe*) 1015

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

County Courts Jurisdiction Extension Bill.—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

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Sir Albert Rollit (*Islington, S.*) 1016
The Attorney General (*Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs*) 1020
Mr. Brynmor Jones (*Swansea District*) 1021
Sir Robert Reid (*Dumfries Burghs*) 1022
Mr. Hemphill (*Tyrone, N.*) 1024
Mr. Causton (*Southwark, W.*) 1025

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Sir Albert Rollit 1025

Question put and agreed to.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law.

Solicitors Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Sir Albert Rollit 1026

Motion made, and Question proposed—"That this Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Albert Rollit.*)

Mr. Clancy (*Dublin Co., N.*) 1029

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Clancy.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Attention being called to the fact that less than forty Members were present, the Sitting was suspended until Four o'clock.

At Four o'clock, sixteen Members only being present, the House was adjourned by Mr. Speaker without Question first put, till Monday next.

Adjourned at Four o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 2ND MARCH, 1903.

EARL POULETT.—Petition of William Tournour Thomas Poulett for leave to lodge his printed case, notwithstanding that the time limited by Standing Order No. LXXXVI. has expired; read, and ordered as prayed 1033

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Bradford Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Avebury 1033
The Chairman of Committees (*The Earl of Morley*) 1033

Second Reading postponed.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—

Dewsbury, Batley and Birstall Tramways.
Romford and District Tramways.
Hamilton, Motherwell, and Wishaw Tramways.

And the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with :—

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements).
Wakefield and District Tramways.
Gosport, Fareham, and Cosham Tramways.

And that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—

Wellington (Salop) Gas [H.L.]
Exeter Railway [H.L.]
South Wales Mineral Railway [H.L.]
South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway [H.L.]
Nantwich Gas [H.L.]
Cardiff Railway[H.L.]
Faversham Gas [H.L.]
Bournemouth Gas and Water [H.L.]
British Gas Light Company (Norwich) [H.L.]
Chatham and District Light Railways [H.L.]
Cleveland and Durham Electric Power [H.L.]
Didcot, Newbury, and Southampton Railway [H.L.]
Dudley, Stourbridge and District Tramways [H.L.]
Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) [H.L.]
Western Trust [H.L.]
Barry Railway [H.L.]
Hexham Gas [H.L.]
London and Brighton and South Coast Railway [H.L.]
Wirral Railway [H.L.]
South Lancashire Tramways [H.L.]
Hastings Tramways (Extensions) [H.L.]
Pelican and British Empire Life Office [H.L.]
Plymouth and Stonehouse Gas [H.L.]
Poole and District Electric Traction [H.L.]
Port Talbot Railway and Docks [H.L.]
Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage [H.L.]
South-Eastern and London, Chatham and Dover Railways [H.L.]
Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal [H.L]

And that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with :—

Derby Gas [H.L.]

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Antrim, Down, Armagh, and Belfast Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Aston Manor Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Belfast Water Bill [H.L.]; Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bury and District Joint Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]: Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity Bill [H.L.]; Frinton-on-Sea Sea Defences Bill [H.L.]; Harrogate Water Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Nantwich Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; North-Western Electricity and Power Gas

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Bill [H.L.]; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Oldham Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Pontypridd Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.]; Salford Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Scunthorpe Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Shropshire, Worcestershire, and East Denbighshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Southampton Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Sutton Coldfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Torquay Corporation Water Bill [H.L.]; Willesden Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Worthing Corporation (Tramways) Bill [H.L.], read 2ª

Scottish American Mortgage Company Bill [H.L.].—Presented; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners... 1033

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY (ESTIMATES) (1903–1904).—Explanatory statement by First Lord of the Admiralty 1035

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.—No. 2940. Argentine Republic (Finances 1901 and 1902). 1035

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Northern Division of Scotland, for the year 1902 1035

COLONIES (ANNUAL).—No. 382. Trinidad and Tobago; Report for 1901–1902 1035

ARMY (IMPERIAL YEOMANRY).—Training Return of Imperial Yeomanry for 1902.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 1035

NATAL.—The Northern Districts Annexation Act, 1902... 1035

POST OFFICE.—Statutory Rules and Orders, 1903—

No. 111. The Telegraph (Foreign-Written Anglo-Danish Press Telegram) Regulations, 1903, dated 9th February, 1903.

No. 112. The Telegraph (Foreign-Written Anglo-Norwegian Anglo-Swedish Press Telegram) Regulations, 1903, dated 9th February, 1903 1035

PIERS AND HARBOURS (PROVISIONAL ORDERS) (SESSION 1903).—Report by the Board of Trade, of their proceedings under the General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, and the General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, Amendment Act, 1862 1036

COMMITTALS (IRELAND).—Returns, from the Clerks of the Crown and Peace, of the number of persons committed for trial in 1902.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table... 1036

AUGMENTATION OF BENEFICES ACT, 1863.—Return of proceedings, under the Lord Chancellor's Augmentation Act, from 28th January 1902, to 28th February 1903.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 7.) ... 1036

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS AND PUBLIC TENDER.

Earl Grey 1036
The Under Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Hardwicke*) 1036
Earl Grey 1037
The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Earl of Onslow*) ... 1040
The First Lord of the Admiralty (*The Earl of Selborne*)... 1042

VENEZUELA.

Lord Tweedmouth 1043

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for further Papers relating to Venezuela."—(*The Lord Tweedmouth*).

Lord Avebury 1054
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 1059
The Earl of Rosebery 1069
The Lord President of the Council (*The Duke of Devonshire*) 1080
Earl Spencer 1083
The First Lord of the Admiralty (*The Earl of Selborne*) 1085
Lord Tweedmouth 1087

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock

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HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 2ND MARCH, 1903.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.—The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means ... 1088

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.—

Bridgwater Gas Bill.
Broadstairs Gas Bill.
Central London Railway Bill.
Charing Cross, Euston and Hampstead Railway Bill.
City and South London Railway Bill.
Commercial Gas Bill.
Coventry Electric Tramways Bill.
Crystal Palace District Gas Bill.
Gas Light and Coke Company Bill.
Gorleston and Southtown Gas Bill.
Great Northern and City Railway Bill.
Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (New Lines and Extensions) Bill.
Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (Various Powers) Bill.
Great Northern Railway Bill.
Great Southern and Western Railway Bill.
Great Western Railway (Pension Fund) Bill.
Hampton Court Gas Bill.
Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill.
Ipswich Gas Bill.
London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill.
Maidstone Gas Bill.
Metropolitan District Railway (Works) Bill.
Midland and Belfast and Northern Counties Railways Bill.
Midland Railway Bill.

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Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynamman Railway Bill.
North Middlesex Gas Bill.
North-West London Railway Bill.
Scarborough Gas Bill.
Sittingbourne District Gas Bill.
Sutton District Water Bill.
Winchester Water and Gas Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 1088

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz. :—

East Ardsley Gas Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1089

PRIVATE BILLS (LORDS).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the list reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means, as intended to originate in the House of Lords, he has certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with in the following cases, viz. :—

Dewsbury, Batley, and Birstal Tramways.
Hamilton, Motherwell, and Wishaw Tramways (Part III.) Substituted Bill.
Preston and Horwich Tramways.

And that he has certified that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in the following cases, viz. :—

Gosport, Fareham, and Cosham Tramways.
Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire).
Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire).
Wakefield and District Tramways 1089

PRIVATE BILLS PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—

Gosport, Fareham, and Cosham Tramways [Lords].
Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire [Lords].
Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) [Lords].
Wakefield and District Tramways [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1090

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements).

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1090

COVENTRY ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS BILL.—Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1091

LANARKSHIRE AND DUMBARTONSHIRE RAILWAY.—Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1091

Barnsley Corporation (Water) Bill; Bath Corporation Water Bill; Beckenham Urban District Council Bill; Cork Harbour Bill; Coventry and Arley Railway Bill; Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area) Bill; East Ham Improvement Bill; Ebbw Vale Water and Improvement Bill; Erith Tramways and Improvement Bill; Gateshead Corporation Bill; Grindleford, Baslow, and Bakewell Railway Bill; Hainault Forest Bill; Hyde Corporation Bill; Leigh Corporation Bill; Llandrindod Wells Improvement Bill; Merthyr Tydvil Urban District Council Bill; Nantyglo and Blaina Water Bill; Nelson Corporation Bill; New Hunstanton Improvement Bill; Plymouth Corporation Bill; South Shields Corporation Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 1091

Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill; West Ham Corporation Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 1092

LONDON'S TRAFFIC—TUBE RAILWAY SCHEMES POSTPONED.

The Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means (*Mr. Jeffreys, Hants, N.*) ... 1092

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Urquhart; and Duthie; to lie upon the Table 1092

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE.—Petitions for extension to women; from Stockport and other places; Yorkshire (two); and Clitheroe; to lie upon the Table 1092

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Sutton-on-Sea; Skegness; and Maltby; to lie upon the Table ... 1093

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TELEGRAPHS (FOREIGN-WRITTEN PRESS TELEGRAMS).—Copy presented, of the Telegraph (Foreign-Written Anglo-Norwegian and Anglo-Swedish Press Telegram) Regulations, 1903. Dated 9th February, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table... 1093

TELEGRAPHS (FOREIGN-WRITTEN PRESS TELEGRAMS).—Copy presented, of the Telegraph (Foreign-written Anglo-Danish Press Telegram) Regulations, 1903. Dated 9th February, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table ... 1093

PIERS AND HARBOURS (PROVISIONAL ORDERS).—Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade of their Proceedings under The General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, and The General Pier and Harbour Act (1861) Amendment Act, Session 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 47.] 1093

ARMY (IMPERIAL YEOMANRY).—Copy presented, of Training Return of Imperial Yeomanry for 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table... 1093

BOARD OF EDUCATION (PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, ETC.).—Copy presented, of Statistics of Public Elementary Schools and Training Colleges, 1901–2 [by Command]; to lie upon the table 1093

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CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903-4.—Copy presented, of Estimates for Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending 31st March, 1904, together with a Copy of the Memorandum by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury relating thereto [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 48] 1093

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).—Copy presented, of Colonial Report, No. 382 (Trinidad and Tobago), Report for 1901-2 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1093

COMMITTALS (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Returns from the Clerks of the Crown and Peace of the number of Persons committed for Trial in 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1094

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORT).—Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Northern Division of Scotland for the year 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1094

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1903-04. Estimates presented, for the year 1903-04, with Explanation of Differences [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 49]... 1094

NAVY (STATEMENT EXPLANATORY OF ESTIMATES).—Copy presented, of Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty explanatory of the Navy Estimates, 1903-04 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table... 1094

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2940 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1094

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House :—

AUGMENTATION OF BENEFICES.—Copy of Return of Proceedings under the Augmentation of Benefices Act, 1863, up to and inclusive of the 28th February, 1903 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 50] 1094

COUNTY COUNCILS (IRELAND) (SALARIES).—Return ordered, "showing the salary and emoluments of the secretary of each County Council in Ireland and the remuneration paid to permanent and temporary clerks employed in the secretary's office in each county in Ireland, for the three years ending the 31st day of March, 1900, 1901, and 1902 respectively."—(*Mr. M'Govern*) 1094

DRAMA AND OPERA (SUBSIDIES) (FOREIGN COUNTRIES, ETC.).—Address for "Return from British Diplomatic or Consular Officers as to financial support, whether in the form of subsidies, guarantees or buildings or sites for buildings, given from State or municipal resources to dramatic, operatic, or musical performances in the countries to which such officers are accredited, specifying in each case the amount or value and the conditions (if any) attached thereto."—(*Mr. Stuart Wortley.*) 1094

BRITISH MUSEUM.—Copy ordered, "of account of the income and expenditure of the British Museum (Special Trust Funds) for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1903; and Return of the number of persons admitted to visit the Museum and the British Museum (Natural History) in each year from 1897 to 1902, both years inclusive; together with a statement of the progress made in the arrangement and description of the collections, and an account of objects added to them in the year 1902."—(*Mr. John Morley.*) 1095

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

POLICE SUPERANNUATION—OFFENCES AGAINST DISCIPLINE.—Question, Mr. Loder (Brighton); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 1095

MAILS TO JAPAN, HONG-KONG, ETC.—Question, Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1096

HOME OFFICE ORDER—DEFINITION OF SUITABLE SANITARY ACCOMMODATION.—Question, Mr. Schwann (Manchester, N.); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas ... 1096

ALLEGED GRIEVANCES OF CUSTOMS BOATMEN—REPLY TO MEMORIAL.—Question, Mr. Luke White (Yorkshire, E.R., Buckrose); Answer, Mr. Hayes Fisher 1097

LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITIES—POPULATION GRANTS. — Question, Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.); Answer, Sir William Anson 1097

EDUCATION ACT, 1902—AID GRANT—BASIS OF CALCULATION.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Sir William Anson 1097

EDUCATION — PAYMENT OF BLOCK GRANT. — Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Sir William Anson 1097

CAUSEWAY AT LOUGHALE, ORKNEY.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 1098

IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE.—Question, Sir John Leng (Dundee); Answer, Mr. Hanbury 1099

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS IN LONDON—ASSIMILATION OF BOUNDARIES.—Question, Mr. Whitmore (Chelsea); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1099

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (ACQUISITION OF LAND) RETURN—DATE OF PUBLICATION.—Question, Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1100

IRELAND—INTERFERENCE BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD WITH ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1100

COMPULSORY ACQUIREMENT OF LANDS AT LOUGHMORE AND WOODBURN—REPORT OF ARBITRATOR.—Question, Colonel McCalmont (Antrim, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1101

IRELAND—REQUISITION OF PRIVATE PROPERTY FOR PUBLIC SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1102

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

WAR COMMISSION.—Question, Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Brodrick; Surrey, Guildford) ... 1102

CAPE TOWN MILITARY SCANDAL.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1103

BUSHMANLAND BORDERERS REGIMENT.—Question, Mr. Corrie Grant (Warwickshire, Rugby); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1104

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VOLUNTEER AND MILITIA ARTILLERY ARMAMENTS.—Question, Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1104

PROVISIONAL REGIMENT OF CAVALRY.—Question, Mr. Winston Churchill; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1105

NAVAL OFFICERS—TRAINING CURRICULUM.—Question, Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 1105

INDIAN ARMY—INDIA'S PROPORTION OF CHARGE.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing)... 1106

ST. PATRICK'S DAY.—Questions, Mr. O'Mara (Kilkenny, S.), Captain Donelan (Cork Co., E.), and Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.); Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 1106

CONGO FREE STATE—BERLIN GENERAL ACT.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Cranborne, Rochester) 1107

BRITISH GUIANA SUGAR PLANTATIONS—INDIAN COOLIE LABOUR.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, Lord Cranborne 1107

BRITISH MISSIONS TO FOREIGN COURTS.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, Lord Cranborne 1108

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK.—Questions, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.), and Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 1108

BOARD OF TRADE—PRESIDENT'S SALARY.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1109

THE ROYAL WELSH FUSILIERS GOAT.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Hanbury, Preston) ... 1110

ALIENS IN WORMWOOD SCRUBBS PRISON.—Questions, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton), and Mr. James Lowther (Kent, Thanet); Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's)... 1111

PUBLIC COMPANIES—FRAUDULENT BALANCE SHEETS.—Question, Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs) 1111

MAIL CONTRACTS.—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton (Canterbury); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1112

UNPROFITABLE TELEGRAPHIC BUSINESS.—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1112

SANDHURST COLLEGE AND OLD DEAN COMMON.—Question, Capt. Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hayes Fisher, Fulham)... 1113

CAMPDEN HILL—OPEN SPACES.—Question, Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.); Answer, Mr. Hayes Fisher 1113

VENTILATION IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—Question, Mr. Reginald Lucas (Portsmouth); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey) 1114

BELFAST REVISION.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid); Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 1114

ST. LOUIS EXPOSITION—IRISH EXHIBITS.—Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1115

IRISH LAND COMMISSION RENT REDUCTIONS.—Question, Mr. Lambert; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1115

LAND PURCHASE ACTS RETURN.—Question, Mr. Lambert; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1116

CHAFFPOOL POLICE HUTS.—Questions, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 1116

INCH STRAND, KERRY—FORESHORE RIGHTS.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1117

POST OFFICE AND THE IRISH LANGUAGE.—Questions, Mr. Crean (Cork, S.E.); Answers, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1118

COMMITTEE OF DEFENCE.—Question, Mr. Arthur Lee (Hampshire, Fareham); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1118

CHILIAN AND ARGENTINE BATTLESHIPS. — Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1119

NEW WRIT.

For the borough of Woolwich, in the room of Vice-Admiral Charles William de la Poer Beresford, commonly called Lord Charles Beresford (Manor of Northstead).—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood*) 1120

NEW MEMBER SWORN.—Thomas Ryburn Buchanan, esquire, for the county of Perth (Eastern Division) 1120

Shops Bill.—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn... 1120

Congested Districts (Scotland) Act (1897) Amendment Bill.—Order for Second Reading upon Friday 8th May read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn 1120

NEW BILLS.

Local Government (Transfer of Powers) Bill.—"To amend Section 10 of the Local Government Act, 1888," presented by Mr. Long; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 65] 1120

Trade Disputes Arbitration Bill—"To provide for Arbitration in Trade Disputes," presented by Mr. Nannetti; supported by Mr. Joyce, Mr. Sheehan, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Keir Hardie, and Mr. E. Crean; to be read a second time upon Friday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 66] ... 1120

THE GALWAY VACANCY.

The Attorney-General (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs) 1121

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland to make out a New Writ for the election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the City of Galway, in the room of Arthur Alfred Lynch, adjudged guilty of high treason."—(*The Attorney General.*)

Sir George Bartley (*Islington, N.*) 1126
Mr. Malcolm (*Suffolk, Stowmarket*) 1132

Amendment proposed.

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'no Writ for the City of Galway be issued in this present Session.'"—(*Sir George Bartley.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Colonel Nolan (*Galway, N.*) 1135
Mr. Bryce (*Aberdeen, S.*) 1137
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) 1138
Lord Hugh Cecil (*Greenwich*) 1142
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 1144
Col. Kenyon-Slaney (*Shropshire, Newport*) 1145

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 248; Noes, 45. (Division List No. 9.)

Main Question put and agreed to.

Ordered, that Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland to make out a New Writ for the election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the City of Galway, in the room of Arthur Alfred Lynch, adjudged guilty of high treason.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1902–3.—CLASS I.—£7,500 (SUPPLEMENTARY), ROYAL PALACES AND MARLBOROUGH HOUSE.

Mr. Whitley (*Halifax*) 1149
Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes (*Huntingdonshire, Ramsey*) 1149

Vote agreed to.

CLASS III.—£20,000 (SUPPLEMENTARY), PRISONS ENGLAND AND WALES.

Mr. Whitley 1150
Mr. Eugene Wason (*Clackmannan and Kinross*) 1150
Sir Albert Rollit (*Islington, S.*) 1151
Mr. Claude Hay (*Shoreditch, Hoxton*) 1151
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (*Mr. Ritchie, Croydon*) 1151

Sir Albert Rollit ... 1151
Sir Walter Foster (*Derbyshire, Ilkeston*) ... 1152
Mr. Galloway (*Manchester, N.W.*) ... 1153
Mr. Kearley (*Devonport*) ... 1154
Mr. Flower (*Bradford, W.*) ... 1155
Mr. Brynmor Jones (*Swansea Districts*) ... 1155
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) ... 1155
The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (*Mr. Cochrane, Ayrshire N.*) ... 1157
Mr. Akers Douglas ... 1158
Sir Walter Foster ... 1159
Mr. Kearley ... 1160
Mr. Whitley ... 1161
Mr. Herbert Samuel (*Yorkshire, Cleveland*) ... 1161
Mr. Akers Douglas ... 1161

Vote agreed to.

Class VII.—£70,000, Indian Coronation Guests —Vote agreed to.

Class II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Salaries and Expenses of certain services transferred from the Mercantile Marine Fund, and other services connected with the Mercantile Marine."

Sir Albert Rollit ... 1162
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) ... 1162

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. Hayes Fisher, Fulham*) ... 1162
Mr. Gibson Bowles ... 1163
Mr. Kearley ... 1163

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. Gibson Bowles ... 1163
Sir Walter Foster ... 1164
Mr. Kearley ... 1165

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 197; Noes, 117. (Division List No. 10.)

Class V.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £10,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the expenses in connection with His Majesty's Embassies, Missions, and of Consular Establishments abroad, and other Expenditure chargeable on the Consular Vote."

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The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Lord Cranborne, Rochester*) ... 1169
Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) ... 1170

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,900, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Charles Hobhouse.*)

Mr. Kearley ... 1171
Mr. Gibson Bowles ... 1171
Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) ... 1172
Lord Cranborne ... 1172
Mr. Wylie (*Dumbartonshire*) ... 1173
Sir John Gorst (*Cambridge University*) ... 1174
Mr. Courtenay Warner ... 1175
Mr. Gibson Bowles ... 1175
Mr. Sydney Buxton (*Tower Hamlets, Poplar*) ... 1176
Mr. Hayes Fisher ... 1177
Mr. Kearley ... 1178
Mr. Moon (*St. Pancras, N.*) ... 1179
Mr. Sydney Buxton ... 1179
Sir J. Blundell Maple (*Camberwell, Dulwich*) ... 1180
Mr. Alfred Davies (*Carmarthen Burghs*) ... 1180
Lord Cranborne ... 1181
Mr. Charles Hobhouse ... 1182
Mr. Heywood Johnstone (*Sussex, Horsham*) ... 1182

Question put

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 108; Noes, 189. (Division List No. 11.)

Original Question put and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £69,600, be granted to His Majesty to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Grant in aid of the British Protectorate in East Africa."

Mr. McKenna (*Monmouthshire, N.*) ... 1185

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow; Committee also report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1902–3.—CLASS V.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £69,600, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Grant in Aid of the British Protectorate in East Africa."

Mr. McKenna ... 1185

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Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding 69,500, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. McKenna.*)

Mr. Bayley (*Derbyshire, Chesterfield*) 1188
Sir Robert Reid (*Dumfries Burghs*) 1189
Lord Cranborne 1190
Mr. Sydney Buxton 1193
Mr. Herbert Samuel 1195
Mr. Lough 1196
Sir John Gorst 1198
Mr. Lloyd-George (*Carnarvon Boroughs*) 1199
Lord Cranborne 1200

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 79 ; Noes, 141. Division List No. 12).

Original Question put and agreed to.

CLASS II.—2. £620 (SUPPLEMENTARY), VALUATION AND BOUNDARY SURVEY (IRELAND).

Mr. Kearley 1203
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Wyndham, Dover*) 1203

Question put and agreed to.

CLASS IV.—£292,807 (SUPPLEMENTARY), BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Mr. Yoxall (*Nottingham, W.*) 1205
The Secretary to the Board of Education (*Sir William Anson, Oxford University*) 1205
Mr. Whitley 1206

Question put and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £28,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Expenses of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland."

Mr. Boland (*Kerry, S.*) 1207

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £27,900, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Boland.*)

Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (*Kerry, W.*) 1208
Mr. Wyndham 1211
Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 1212

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 63 ; Noes, 128. (Division List No. 13).

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow ; Committee to sit again to-morrow.

Outdoor Relief (Friendly Societies) Bill.

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the chair.]

On Clause 1:—

Colonel Blundell (*Lancashire, Ince*) 1215

Bill considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

Cruelty to Animals Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time." Debate arising.

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned 1215

Debate to be resumed upon Wednesday.

Light Locomotives (Ireland) Bill.—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

NEW BILLS.

TRUSTEE ACT (1893) AMENDMENT.—Bill to amend the Trustee Act, 1893, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Galloway, Lord Hugh Cecil, Sir Charles Renshaw, and Mr. John Hutton.

Trustee Act (1893) Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Trustee Act, 1893," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, and to be printed. [Bill 67] 1216

LIBEL.—Bill to amend the law for Libel in connection with the newspaper press, ordered to be brought in by Major Rasch, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Ernest Gray, and Mr. Strutt.

Libel Bill.—"To amend the law for Libel in connection with the newspaper press," presented and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 68.] 1216

Adjourned at Five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 3RD MARCH, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with—

Milford Docks [H.L.].
Indiarubber, Guttapercha, and Telegraph Works Company [H.L.].
Lima Railways [H.L.].
Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation [H.L.].
Life Association of Scotland [H.L.].

And that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with—

Preston and Horwich Tramways.
Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire).
Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1217

Preston and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Presented, and read 1^{a}. ... 1217

Dewsbury, Batley, and Birstal Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Hamilton, Motherwell, and Wishaw Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Wakefield and District Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Presented, read 1^{a}, and referred to the Examiners 1217

Old Bridewell Burying Ground Bill [H.L.]; Somerset and District Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Rickmansworth Gas Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^{a}. 1217

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.—Statistics of public elementary schools and training colleges, 1901–1902 1218

GERMANY (NEW GENERAL CUSTOMS TARIFF).—Translation of the New General Customs Tariff of Germany, with comparison, as far as possible, of the rates of Customs duty contained in the tariff, with the rates at present in force on imports into Germany from the United Kingdom (in continuation and completion of [C. 779] of 1901).

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 1218

BANKRUPTCY COURTS (IRELAND).—Returns of the official assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy, in Ireland, and the Local Courts, Belfast and Cork, for the year 1902 1218

RAILWAY COMPANIES POWERS ACT, 1864.—Certificate of the Board of Trade authorising the Axminster and Lyme Regis Light Railway Company to raise additional capital 1218

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT.—Annual Report on the state of the finances of the University of Aberdeen under the provisions of section 30 of the Act.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table ... 1218

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE APPOINTED.—The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee.

D. Bedford.
D. Marlborough.
D. Northumberland.
M. Lansdowne.
E. Derby.
E. Denbigh.
E. Chesterfield.
E. Jersey.
E. Lauderdale.
E. Waldegrave.
E. Cadogan.
E. Howe
E. Amherst.
E. Camperdown.
E. Dartrey.
E. Lytton.
E. Carrington.
E. Crewe.
V. Sidmouth.
V. Knutsford.
V. Ridley.
V. Colville of Culross.
V. Churchill.
L. Zouche of Haryngworth.
L. Barnard.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle (*E. Cork and Orrery*).
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Colchester.
L. Poltimore.
L. Kintore (*E. Kintore*).
L. Belper.
L. Brougham and Vaux.
L. Fermanagh (*E. Erne*).
L. Lamington.
L. Herries.
L. Monkswell.
L. Newton.
L. Welby.
L. Ludlow.

All Petitions relating to the Standing Orders which shall be presented during the present session referred to the Committee unless otherwise ordered 1218

STANDING COMMITTEE.—Ordered, That a Standing Committee be appointed for the consideration of such Public Bills as may be committed to it by the House 1219

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE APPOINTED.—The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:

E. Cowper.
E. Stanhope.
E. Waldegrave.
V. Colville of Culross.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle (*E. Cork and Orrery*).
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Kintore (*E. Kintore*).

1219

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.—Select Committee appointed; the Lords following, with the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President, and the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:

D. Richmond.
D. Northumberland.
M. Cholmondeley.
M. Ripon.
M. Breadalbane.
E. Clarendon (*L. Chamberlain*).
E. Chesterfield.
E. Waldegrave.
E. Spencer.
E. Mount Edgcumbe.
E. Cawdor.
E. Camperdown.
E. de Montalt.
E. Cranbrook.
E. Ancaster.
V. Hampden.
V. Cross.
V. Peel.
V. Knutsford.
V. Colville of Culross.
V. Churchill.
L. Windsor.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle (*E. Cork and Orrery*).
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Colchester.
L. Rosebery (*E. Rosebery*).
L. Kintore (*E. Kintore*).
L. Belper.
L. Rowton.
L. Tweedmouth.
L. Monk Bretton.
L. Macnaghten.
L. Welby.
L. Burghclere.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.—The Lords following, viz.:

E. Chesterfield,
E. Waldegrave,
V. Colville of Culross,
L. Ribblesdale,

with the Chairman of Committees, were appointed a Committee to select and propose to the House the names of the Five Lords to form a Select Committee for the consideration of each opposed Private Bill 1219

Out-Door Relief (Friendly Societies) Bill (No. 8); Light Locomotives (Ireland) Bill (No. 9).—Brought from the Commons and read 1ª; and to be printed 1220

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 3RD MARCH, 1903.

KING'S SPEECH (ANSWER TO ADDRESS).—The Comptroller of the Household reported His Majesty's Answer to the Address 1220

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.—The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means ... 1220

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz. :

Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Bill.
Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Bill.
Walker and Walsend Union Gas Bill.

Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time. 1221

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH) —Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills that, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz.—

London United Tramways Bill.
Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 1221

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 66 NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 66 has not been complied with, viz.—

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1221

Stroud District and Cheltenham Tramways Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 1221

Middlesbrough Corporation Bill (By Order).—Read a second time, and committed 1221

ROMFORD AND DISTRICT TRAMWAYS.—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Louis Sinclair and Mr. Price. 1222

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (TRAMWAYS AND IMPROVEMENTS).—Petition for Bill, referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1222

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: From Monikie; Bonhill; Dunnet; and New Monkland; to lie upon the Table ... 1222

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petitions in favour: From Leytonstone; Whitechapel; and Chelsea; to lie upon the Table... ... 1222

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

WAGES AND EFFECTS OF DECEASED SEAMEN.—Account (presented 23rd February) to be printed. [No. 51] 1222

BANKRUPTCY COURTS (IRELAND).—Annual Returns presented, of the Official Assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland and the Local Courts, Belfast and Cork, for the year 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table ... 1222

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GERMAN TARIFF.—Copy presented, of Translation of the new General Customs Tariff of Germany, with comparison, as far as possible, of the rates of Customs Duty contained in the Tariff, with the rates at present in force on on imports into Germany from the United Kingdom [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1222

RAILWAYS (CERTIFICATES) AXMINSTER AND LYME REGIS LIGHT RAILWAY COMPANY.—Copy presented, of Draft Certificate of the Board of Trade authorising the Axminster and Lyme Regis Light Railway Company to raise additional Capital [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1222

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN.—Copy presented, of Abstract of Accounts of the University of Aberdeen for the year ending 15th September, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 52.] 1223

ALTERATIONS IN THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.—Return presented, relative thereto (Address 27th November, 1902; *Mr. Charles M'Arthur*); to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 53.] 1223

FOREIGN TRADE AND COMMERCE.—Return ordered, "of Accounts relating to the Trade and Commerce of certain Foreign Countries and British Possessions."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour*) 1223

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

SHETLAND MAILS.—IMPROVED SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1223

HEALTH OF HONG KONG—NEW LEGISLATION.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1223

SOUTH AFRICA—CRIMINAL PROCEDURE CODE.—Question, Mr. Toulmin (Lancashire, Bury); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1224

NAVAL ARMAMENTS—MUZZLE-LOADING GUNS.—Question, Mr. Harmsworth (Caithness-shire); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1224

INSUBORDINATION ON H.M.S. "PEMBROKE."—Question, Mr. Harmsworth; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1225

PRIVATE ASYLUMS FOR INCIPIENT MENTAL DERANGEMENT.—Question, Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.); Answer, Sir Robert Finlay 1225

PASTEUR INSTITUTE FOR SOUTHERN INDIA.—Question, Colonel Lockwood (Essex, Epping); Answer, Lord George Hamilton 1225

IRISH CENSUS—COST OF PRINTING.—Question, Mr. McKean (Monaghan, S.); Answer, Mr. Hayes Fisher 1226

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

ARMY CORPS RETURNS.—Question, Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) ... 1226

ARMY INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT.—Question, Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1227

ARMY RECRUITING—ENLISTMENT OF SPECIALS SUSPENDED.—Question, Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1227

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RECRUITS' CHARACTERS.—Questions, Sir John Colomb and Mr. Beckett (Yorkshire, N.R., Whitby); Answers, Mr. Brodrick 1228

INSPECTOR GENERAL OF RECRUITING—ANNUAL REPORT.—Question, Mr. Beckett; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1229

ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE REGULATIONS.—Question, Mr. Winston Churchill; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1229

COALING STATIONS GARRISON.—Question, Mr. Winston Churchill; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 1229

INDIAN MILITARY CHARGES.—Questions, Mr. Winston Churchill; Answers, The Secretary of State for India (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing) ... 1230

COST OF SOLDIERS IN INDIA.—Question, Major Evans Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney); Answer, Lord George Hamilton 1230

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN INDIA—CACHAR TEA GARDENS CASE.—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, Lord George Hamilton 1231

DELHI DURBAR—IMPERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, Lord George Hamilton 1231

SEISTAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION.—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, Lord George Hamilton 1232

RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Cranborne, Rochester) 1233

DEATH DUTIES—ASSESSMENT OF PUBLICANS' LICENCES.—Question, Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 1233

ALIEN CRIMINALS IN THE METROPOLIS.—Question, Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 1234

SUNDERLAND AND DURHAM COUNTY BLIND ASYLUM—LABOUR DISPUTE.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Methyr Tydvil); Answer, The President of the Board Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1234

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY — ORLANDO BRIDGE SHUNTING FATALITY.—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour ... 1235

MEAT TRADES—FALSE DESCRIPTIONS.—Questions, Mr. Alfred Davies (Carmarthen Boroughs) and Mr. James Lowther (Kent, Thanet); Answers, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Hanbury, Preston) 1235

M'FARLANE'S ESTATE, COUNTY MAYO.—Question, Captain Donelan (Cork, E.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1237

HON. J. BROWNE'S ESTATE.—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1238

KNOCALASSA GRAZING FARM, RIVERSTOWN, COUNTY SLIGO.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1238

St. Louis Exposition — Representation of the United Kingdom.—Question, Mr. Norman (Wolverhampton, S.); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) ... 1238

Select Committee on Private Business. — Question, Mr. John Ellis (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1239

Business of the House.—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), Sir John Colomb and Sir Howard Vincent; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour and Mr. Brodrick 1239

Selection (Standing Committees) (Chairmen's Panel).—Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had selected the following six Members to be the Chairmen's Panel and to serve as Chairmen of the two Standing Committees to be appointed under Standing Order, No. 47:—Mr. John Ellis, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Sir James Fergusson, Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, Mr. Laurence Hardy, and Mr. Stuart Wortley.

Report to lie upon the Table 1240

Selection (Standing Committees).—Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee:—Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Baird, Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Gerald Balfour, Mr. Beckett, Mr. Boland, Mr. Griffith Boscawen, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Burt, Sir Charles Cayzer, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Channing, Mr Cochrane, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Jesse Collings, Sir John Colomb, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Dillon, Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Doughty, Mr. Farrell, Sir Fortescue Flannery, Sir Henry Fowler, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Garfit, Sir Alfred Hickman, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir James Joicey, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Bonar Law, Sir Elliott Lees, Mr. Lloyd-George, Colonel Long, Mr. Walter Long, Mr. Charles M'Arthur, Dr. MacDonnell, Mr. William M'Killop, Sir William Mather, Mr. W. J. Maxwell,, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Parkes, Mr. Pike Pease, Colonel Pilkington, Sir James Rankin, Sir Charles Renshaw, Mr. Herbert Roberts, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Round, Mr. Runciman, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Stewart Samuel, Sir Henry Seton-Karr, Mr. Thomas Shaw, Sir Barrington Simeon, Sir Edward Strachey, Mr. Talbot, Mr. Theodore Taylor, Mr. Tennant, Mr. Whitley Thomson, Sir William Tomlinson, Mr. Tully, Mr. George Whitley, Colonel Williams, Sir Frederick Wills, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. Wolff, and Mr. Samuel Young.

Mr. Halsey further reported from the Committee; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee:—The Lord Advocate, Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Atkinson, Mr Barlow, Sir George Bartley, Mr. Butcher, Mr. Carew, Lord Hugh Cecil, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Coghill, Mr. Colston, Mr. Cripps, Mr. Bromley-Davenport, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Tatton Egerton, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Samuel Evans, Sir George Fardell, Mr. Flynn, Mr Vicary Gibbs, Sir Frederick Godson, Mr. Goulding, Mr. H. D. Greene, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Harwood, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. James Heath, Mr. Helder, Mr. Hemphill, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr.

John Hutton, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Lees Knowles, Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Sir Joseph Leese, Mr. Lloyd Morgan, Mr. Loder, Mr. A. K. Loyd, Mr. Lyttelton, Mr. MacNeill, Mr. Middlemore, Mr. William Moore, Mr. Arthur Morton, Mr. Newdigate, Captain Norton, Sir Francis Sharpe Powell, Lieutenant-Colonel Pryce-Jones, Sir Robert Reid, Mr. Remnant, Mr. Matthew White Ridley, Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. Parker Smith, Mr. Soames, Mr. Solicitor General, Sir Ernest Spencer, Mr. Stevenson, Sir Benjamin Stone, Mr. Thornton, Mr. Ure, Sir Howard Vincent, Mr. Robert Wallace, Mr. Whitley, and Sir James Woodhouse.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee; That, in Pursuance of the provisions of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, they had selected the following fifteen Members to form the Parliamentary Panel of Members of this House to act as Commissioners:—Mr. Emmott, Mr. John Edward Gordon (Elgin), Mr. Charles Hobhouse, Mr. Alfred Hutton, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. A. K. Loyd, Mr. MacCrae, Mr. Pym, Sir Charles Renshaw, Mr. Abel Smith, Mr. Parker Smith, Sir Walter Thorburn, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. John Wilson (Falkirk), and Mr. Wylie.

Reports to lie upon the Table 1240

NEW BILLS.

Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill.—"To enable local authorities to adopt the provisions of the Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act, 1896," presented by Captain Jessel; supported by Mr. Hay, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Sir Seymour King, Sir Blundell Maple, Mr. Sinclair, Major Rasch, Mr. Freeman-Thomas, and Mr. Wanklyn; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 69.] 1242

Criminal Aliens Bill.—"To exclude and deport Criminal Aliens," presented by Sir Howard Vincent; supported by Mr. Forde Ridley, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Plummer, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Harry Samuel, Sir Blundell Maple, Mr. Vicary Gibbs, and Major Rasch; to be read a second time upon Friday 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 70.] 1242

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1902-3 -CLASS II.—£3,700 (Supplementary), Colonial Office.

Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee) 1243
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 1252
Sir Robert Reid (Dumfries Burghs) 1255
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 1256
The Postmaster General (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) ... 1256
Mr. James Lowther (Kent, Thanet) 1262

Vote agreed to.

CLASS V.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,016,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for sundry Colonial Services, including a Grant-in-Aid:"

Mr. Whitley (Halifax) ... 1264
Mr. Austen Chamberlain ... 1267
Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) ... 1269
Mr. Gibson Bowles ... 1270
Sir Robert Reid (Dumfries Burghs) ... 1272
Mr. Austen Chamberlain ... 1273
Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham) ... 1274
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) ... 1275
Sir Brampton Gurdon (Norfolk, N.) ... 1276
Lieut.-Col. George Kemp (Lancashire, Heywood) ... 1276
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) ... 1277

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £1,015,900 be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Mr. Gibson Bowles ... 1278
Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) ... 1279
Sir Robert Mowbray (Lambeth, Brixton) ... 1280
Sir J. Blundell Maple (Camberwell, Dulwich) ... 1280
Mr. Austen Chamberlain ... 1280
Sir Robert Reid ... 1281
Sir John Gorst ... 1281

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 215; Noes, 148. (Division List, No. 14.)

ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1902–3.—£100 (Supplementary) Pay, etc., of the Army.

Sir J. Blundell Maple ... 1285
The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) ... 1288
Sir Arthur Hayter (Walsall) ... 1290
Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.) ... 1292
The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) ... 1294
Mr Courtenay Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) ... 1295
Mr. Seely (Lincoln) ... 1296
Sir Joseph Leese (Lancashire, Accrington) ... 1296
Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple) ... 1297
Lord Stanley ... 1297
Sir J. Blundell Maple ... 1297
Mr. Charles Hobhouse ... 1298
Mr. Brodrick ... 1298

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

SUPPLY [2ND MARCH, AFTERNOON SITTING].

Resolutions reported—

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1902–3.—CLASS I.

1. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £7,500, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for Expenditure in respect of Royal Palaces and Marlborough House."

CLASS III.

2. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £20,300, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Expenses of the Prisons in England and Wales."

CLASS VII.

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £70,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, to repay to the India Office the Expenses of the Entertainment in this Country of Indian Representative Visitors at the Coronation of His Majesty."

CLASS II.

4. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Salaries and Expenses of certain services transferred from the Mercantile Marine Fund, and other services connected with the Mercantile Marine."

CLASS V.

5. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £10,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the expenses in connection with His Majesty's Embassies, Missions, and of Consular Establishments abroad, and other Expenditure chargeable on the Consular Vote."

Resolutions agreed to 1299

SUPPLY [2ND MARCH, EVENING SITTING].

Resolutions reported.

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1902–3.

CLASS V.

1. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £69,600, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Grant in aid of the British Protectorate in East Africa."

CLASS II.

2. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £620, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Salaries and Expenses of the General Valuation and Boundary Survey of Ireland."

CLASS IV.

3. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £292,807, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Board of Education."

4. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £28,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Expenses of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland."

Resolutions agreed to 1300

And, there being no further Business set down for the Afternoon Sitting, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair until this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

MINISTRY OF COMMERCE.

Mr. Hoult (*Cheshire, Wirral*) 1301
Mr. D. A. Thomas (*Merthyr Tydvil*) 1304

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the constitution of the Board of Trade has become obsolete, and this House is of opinion that a Department presided over by a Minister of Commerce and Industry, having the *status* of a principal Secretary of State, should be substituted for the present Office, to which should be entrusted all matters more particularly appertaining to commerce and industry, and to that end that an inquiry should be forthwith instituted with the view of re-arranging the duties and functions of existing Departments."—(*Mr. Hoult.*)

Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 1310

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'with a view to administrative efficiency, this House calls on His Majesty's Government to undertake a redistribution of duties between the various Government Departments concerned, with due regard to the interests of labour.'"—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir Albert Rollit (*Islington, S.*) 1317
Mr. Bell (*Derby*) 1322
Mr. Randles (*Cumberland, Cockermouth*) 1324
Mr. Bryce (*Aberdeen, S.*) 1327
Mr. Louis Sinclair (*Essex, Romford*) 1333
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Ritchie, Croydon*) 1335

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Bank Holidays (Ireland) Bill.

(In Committee.)

Mr. O'Mara (Kilkenny, S.) 1340

The House adjourned at ten minutes before Twelve o'clock.

In pursuance of Standing Order No. 1, "Sittings of the House," I hereby nominate—The Right Hon. Arthur Frederick Jeffreys, The Right Hon. Charles Beilby Stuart-Wortley, The Right Hon. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. John Edward Ellis, and Mr. Edward Blake, to act during this session as temporary Chairmen of Committees when requested by the Chairman of Ways and Means.

WILLIAM COURT GULLY... ... ... Speaker. 1340

HOUSE OF COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, 4TH MARCH, 1903.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.—The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means 1341

NEW WRIT.

For the County of Sussex (Eastern or Rye Division), in the room of Colonel Arthur Montague Brookfield, His Majesty's Consul at Monte Video.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*) 1341

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

London Building Act (Amendment) Bill.—Order [24th February] that the London Building Acts (Amendment) Bill be read a second time, read and discharged—Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 1341

Romford and District Tramways Bill.—"To authorise the Empire Electric Light and Power Company, Limited, to construct tramways in Romford and the adjoining districts in the County of Essex; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1341

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Kinellar; Newhills; Garioch; Arbilot; Stirling; Strathdon; Old Deer; Maryton; Auchterarder; Cumbraes; Dalziel; and Bothwell; to lie upon the Table 1341

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petition from West Dulwich, in favour, to lie upon the Table 1341

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LOCAL TAXATION (ROYAL COMMISSION).—Copy presented, of Index to the Reports of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1342

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Foreign Trade and Commerce.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd March; *Mr. Gerald Balfour*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 54]... 1342

Sea Fisheries Regulation Act, 1888.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Board of Trade, under the provisions of the said Act, for the variation of their Order creating the Devon Sea Fisheries District, together with Report by Inspector on Inquiry [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 55] 1342

Census of Scotland, 1901.—Copy presented, of Eleventh Decennial Census of the population of Scotland, taken 31st March, 1901, with Report (Vol. II.) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1342

Turkey (No. 2, 1903).—Copy presented, of further correspondence respecting the affairs of South Eastern Europe (reforms in the administration of the Vilayets of Salonica, Monastir, and Kossovo) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1342

Post Office (Contract for Accelerated Mail Service to and from Ireland, via Carlisle, Stranraer, and Larne).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 25th February; *Mr. Hayes Fisher*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 56] 1342

Land Registry (New Buildings) Act, 1900.—Account presented, showing the money issued from the Consolidated Fund, under the provisions of the Land Registry (New Buildings) Act, 1900, and of the Expenditure; the money expended and borrowed and the securities created under the said Act, for the period ended the 31st March, 1902; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 57] 1342

Army (Recruiting).—Copy presented, of Annual Report of the Inspector General of recruiting for 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table ... 1343

Army (Memorandum on Estimates.—Copy presented, of Memorandum of the Secretary of State relating to the Army Estimates of 1903–1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1343

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2941 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table ... 1343

East India (Income and Expenditure).—Address for "Return of the Net Income and Expenditure of British India, under certain specified heads, for the eleven years from 1891–1892 to 1901–1902 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 93, of Session 1902)."—(*Sir Henry Fowler.*) 1343

Food Supplies (Imported).—Return ordered, "showing annually, for each year since 1870, inclusive, in a summarised form, the imported quantities of (1) wheat, wheat meal, and flour; (2) meat, including animals for food; and (3) sugar retained for home consumption; and also the countries from which these supplies of food were derived."—(*Mr. D. A. Thomas.*)... ... 1343

Shanghai (Consular Jurisdiction).—Address for "Return, giving *modus vivendi* adopted with regard to Consular Jurisdiction in International Settlement at Shanghai."—(*Mr. Joseph Walton.*) 1343

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1888—AMENDMENT OF SECTION 26.—Question, Mr. Brynmor Jones (Swansea Districts); Answer, Mr. Walter Long ... 1344

PHARMACY ACT—SCHEDULE A.—Question, Col. Long (Worcestershire, Evesham); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1344

ROAD CONSTRUCTION AT LETTERS, ROSS-SHIRE.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 1345

SCOTCH EDUCATION—PAYMENT OF GRANTS.—Question, Sir John Long (Dundee); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray... 1345

WORKING OF SMALL HOLDINGS ACT IN SCOTLAND.—Question, Capt. Sinclair (Forfarshire); Answer, Mr. Hanbury... 1346

LABOURERS IN THE DUBLIN ORDNANCE STORES—RATES OF PAY.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Lord Stanley 1347

TELEGRAPHIC SERVICE—UNDERGROUND WIRE.—Question, Sir John Leng; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1347

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FOREIGN OFFICE QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT—COST OF TELEGRAMS.—Question, Mr. Heywood Johnstone (Sussex, Horsham); Answer, Lord Cranborne 1348

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ARGENTINE CATTLE LANDED AT LIVERPOOL.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Hanbury 1348

TEACHERS IN IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1349

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) RETURN.—Question, Mr. Mansfield (Lincolnshire, Spalding); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1349

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REPORT ON ARMY RECRUITING.—Question, Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 1350

THE RESERVE.—Question, Mr. Winston Churchill; Answer, Mr. Brodrick ... 1350

ARMY OFFICERS. Questions, Colonel Welby (Taunton); Answers, Mr. Brodrick 1350

IRELAND AND THE VOLUNTEERS. -Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1351

ARMY DISCHARGES.—CERTIFICATES OF CHARACTER.—Questions, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answers, Mr. Brodrick 1351

HONG KONG DEFENCES.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross, Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1351

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TRANSFERS FROM THE MILITIA TO THE ARMY.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1352

DINGWALL BARRACKS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1352

THE DEATH OF LIEUTENANT BOYLE.—Question, Sir J. Fergusson (Manchester, N.E.); Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 1352

NAVAL GUNNERY.—Question, Mr. Reginald Lucas (Portsmouth); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 1353

ENGINEER OFFICERS IN THE NAVY.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster... 1353

UNITED STATES AND THE NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Cranborne, Rochester) 1354

LABOUR COLONIES IN HOLLAND.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Lord Cranborne 1355

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ALIENS IN BRITISH PRISONS. — Questions, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 1355

LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY—REHOUSING OF THE LABOURING CLASS.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay; Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas... ... 1356

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS BEFORE THE COMMISSION ON ALIEN IMMIGRATION.—Question, Mr. Bull (Hammersmith); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 1356

LICENSING ACT—INTERNAL COMMUNICATION.—Question, Mr. David Morgan (Essex, Walthamstow); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 1357

SMALLPOX IN STAFFORDSHIRE POTTERIES.—Question, Mr. Coghill (Stoke-upon-Trent); Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, W.) 1357

NORTH SEA FISHERIES.—Question, Mr Weir; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1358

AVOCH CHANNEL, ROSS-SHIRE.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1358

NATIONAL FOOD SUPPLIES.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1358

ROSS-SHIRE ROADS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) 1359

SCOTTISH FISHERY CRUISER "GARLAND."—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 1359

ESSEX EDUCATION GRANT.—Question, Major Rasch (Essex, Epping); Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 1359

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EDUCATION ACT. — Question, Mr. Levy (Leicestershire, Loughborough); Answer, Sir William Anson 1360

BOURNEA MEDICAL OFFICER.—Question, Mr. Kendal O'Brien (Tipperary, Mid.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1361

IRISH EDUCATIONAL GRANT.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 8361

GUN LICENCES IN IRELAND—CASE OF WILLIAM MAXWELL. Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1361

LIMERICK ARTIZANS' DWELLINGS LOAN.—Question, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hayes Fisher, Fulham)... 1362

TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH SCOTLAND—DAMAGE BY STORM.—Question, Mr. Parker Smith (Lanarkshire, Partick); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1362

DEFENCES OF GIBRALTAR.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1363

VACCINATION ACT.—Questions, Mr. Coghill and Mr. Galloway (Manchester, E.); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1363

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1364

TAXATION OF NATIVES IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Trevelyan (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1364

THE NAVY ESTIMATES.—Question, Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1364

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Question, Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1365

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.—*Mr. John Redmond (Waterford)* 1365

NEW BILLS.

Market Gardeners' Compensation Bill.—"To remove certain doubts as to the meaning of The Market Gardeners' Compensation Act, 1895," presented by Colonel Long; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 18th March, and to be printed. [Bill 72.]... 1366

County Councils (Bills in Parliament) Bill.—"To amend the Local Government Act, 1888, by empowering County Councils to promote Bills in Parliament," presented by Mr. Walter Long; supported by Mr. Grant Lawson; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 71.] 1366

Ministry of Commerce Bill.—"To reform, co-ordinate, and define our Commercial Administration and to create a Ministry of Commerce," presented by Mr. Louis Sinclair; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 18th March, and to be printed. [Bill 73.]... 1366

SUPPLY [3RD MARCH].

Resolutions reported :—

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1902–3.—CLASS II.

1. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £3,700, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1903, for the salaries and expenses of the Department of His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies."

CLASS V.

2. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,016,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for sundry Colonial Services, including a Grant-in-Aid."

First Resolution agreed to.

Second Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 1367
The Postmaster General (*Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.*)... 1370
Mr. Sydney Buxton (*Tower Hamlets, Poplar*) 1373
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. Hayes Fisher, Fulham*) ... 1375
Mr. Cohen (*Islington, E.*)... 1377
Mr. Swift MacNeill (*Donegal, S.*)... 1377

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 163 ; Noes, 120. (Division List No. 15.)

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATE, 1902-3.

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £100, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for Expenditure in Excess of that provided for in the original Army Estimates for the year for the Pay, etc., of the Army."

Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 1381
The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford*) .. 1381
Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) 1381
Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 1382
Mr. Weir (*Ross and Cromarty*) 1382

Resolution agreed to.

NAVAL RESERVE FORCES.

The Secretary to the Admiralty (*Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.*) ..: 1382

"Bill to provide for the Constitution of a Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, and a Force of Royal Marine Volunteers, and otherwise amend the Law relating to His Majesty's Naval Forces ;" ordered to be brought in by Mr. Arnold-Forster and Mr. Pretyman.

Naval Forces Bill.—"To provide for the Constitution of a Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, and a Force of Royal Marine Volunteers, and otherwise amend the Law relating to His Majesty's Naval Forces," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 74.]

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT.

The Lord Advocate, Mr. A. Graham Murray (Buteshire) ... 1384
Sir Robert Reid (Dumfries Burghs) ... 1395
Sir James Fergusson (Manchester, N.E.) ... 1399
Mr. Munro Fergusson (Leith Burghs) ... 1401
Mr. Parker Smith (Lanarkshire, Partick) ... 1402
Major Jameson (Clare, W.) ... 1403
Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.) ... 1404
Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) ... 1405

"Bill to amend the Licensing (Scotland) Acts, 1828 to 1897," ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland, and Mr. Anstruther.

Licensing (Scotland) Acts Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Licensing (Scotland) Acts, 1828 to 1897," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 75.]

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER.

The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Hanbury, Preston) ... 1407
Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.) ... 1410
Mr. A. K. Loyd (Berkshire, Abingdon) ... 1410
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) ... 1411
Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.) ... 1413
Sir Edward Strachey (Somersetshire, S.) ... 1414
Mr. Heywood Johnstone (Sussex, Horsham) ... 1415
Mr. Gilhooly (Cork County, W.) ... 1415
Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple) ... 1416
Mr. O'Mara (Kilkenny, S.) ... 1416
Mr. Lundon (Limerick, E.) ... 1417
Mr. Joyce (Limerick) ... 1418
Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) ... 1419
Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) ... 1420

"Bill to amend the Law with regard to the sale of Adulterated Butter," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hanbury and Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.

Sale of Adulterated Butter Bill.—"To amend the Law with regard to the sale of Adulterated Butter," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 76.]

Employment of Children Bill.

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) ... 1422
Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee) ... 1423
Mr. Tennant (Berwickshire) ... 1424
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) ... 1424
Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.) ... 1425

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Mr. Middlemore (Birmingham, N.) 1426
Mr. John Burns (Battersea) 1427
Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.) 1429
Mr. Shackleton (Lancashire, Clitheroe) 1429
Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester) 1429

"Bill to make better provision for regulating the employment of children," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas and Mr. Cochrane.

Employment of Children Bill.—"To make better provision for regulating the employment of children," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 77.]

MUNICIPAL TRADING.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient that a Select Committee of this House be appointed to join with a Committee of the Lords to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.) 1430
Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester) 1432
Mr. Galloway (Manchester, S.W.) 1433
Mr. Vicary Gibbs (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) 1434
The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1435
Mr. John Burns (Battersea) 1437

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed To morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

TRADES UNIONS.

Mr. Pemberton (Sunderland) 1438
Mr. Haldane (Haddingtonshire) 1439

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Committee be appointed to inquire into the existing law as it affects Trades Unions, and report what, if any, alterations should be made therein."—(*Mr. Pemberton.*)

Mr. Galloway (Manchester, S.W.) 1440

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'Committee' and insert the word 'Commission' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Galloway.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Committee' stand part of the Question."

Mr. James Hope (Sheffield, Brightside) 1443
Mr. Bell (Derby) 1444
Mr. Lawson Walton (Leeds, S.) 1445
Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester) 1447

Mr. Stuart Wortley (Sheffield, Hallam) 1448
Mr. Shackleton (Lancashire, Clitheroe) 1449
Mr. White Ridley (Stalybridge) 1450
Mr. Asquith (Fifeshire, E.) 1450
The Solicitor General (Sir Edward Carson, Dublin University) 1452

Amendment by leave, withdrawn.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

EARLY CLOSING OF SHOPS.

Mr. Price (Norfolk E.) 1453
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 1456

Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the unnecessarily long hours of labour in shops are injurious to the health and well-being of all concerned; that it is desirable that Borough and District Councils should be authorised to obtain Provisional Orders making such regulations in respect to the closing of shops and the limitation of the hours of labour of shop workers as may seem to them to be necessary for the areas under their jurisdiction, thus effectively carrying out the recommendation of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Early Closing of Shops, as embodied in paragraph 15 of the Report of 1901."—(*Mr. Price.*)

Mr. Asquith (Fifeshire, E.) 1459
Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham) 1462
Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.) 1464
Lieutenant Colonel Geo. Kemp (Lancashire, Heywood) 1465
Mr. Tennant (Berwickshire) 1466
Major Evans-Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) 1468
Mr. John Burns (Battersea) 1469
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 1471
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 1475

Resolved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the unnecessarily long hours of labour in shops are injurious to the health and well-being of all concerned; that it is desirable that Borough and District Councils should be authorised to obtain Provisional Orders making such regulations in respect to the closing of shops and the limitation of the hours of labour of shop workers as may seem to them to be necessary for the areas under their jurisdiction; thus effectively carrying out the recommendation of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Early Closing of Shops, as embodied in paragraph 15 of the Report of 1901."—(*Mr. Price.*)

School Board Electorate (Scotland) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) 1476

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

Adjourned at two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS : THURSDAY, 5TH MARCH, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :

Harrow and Stanmore Gas [H.L.].
Taff Vale Railway [H.L.].
London and North-Western Railway [H.L.].
North's Navigation Collieries [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1477

Gosport, Fareham and Cosham Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Presented ; read 1ª ; and referred to the Examiners.

Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) Bill [H.L.] ; Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) Bill [H.L.].—Presented, and read 1ª.

Fife Electric Power Bill [H.L.] ; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.] ; Bournmouth Gas and Water Bill [H.L.] ; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.] ; Exeter Railway Bill [H.L.] ; Faversham Gas Bill [H.L.] ; Hastings Tramways (Extensions) Bill [H.L.] ; Hexham Gas Bill [H.L.] ; Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.] ; London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill [H.L.] ; Nantwich Gas Bill [H.L.] ; South Wales Mineral Railway Bill [H.L.] ; South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway Bill [H.L.] ; Wellington (Salop) Gas Bill [H.L.] ; Western Trust Bill [H.L.] ; Wirral Railway Bill [H.L.] ; British Gas Light Company (Norwich) Bill [H.L.] ; Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power Bill [H.L.] ; Dudley, Stourbridge, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.] Pelican and British Empire Life Office Bill [H.L] ; Plymouth and Stonehouse Gas Bill [H.L.] ; Poole and District Electric Traction Bill [H.L.] ; Port Talbot Railway and Docks Bill [H.L.] ; Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage Bill [H.L.] ; South-Eastern and London, Chatham and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.] ; Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Bill [H.L.]—Read 2ª. 1477

Birmingham District Tramways Bill [H.L.] ; Chatham and District Light Railways Bill [H.L.]; Croydon and District Electric Tramways Bill; Harrrow Road and Paddington Tramways Bill ; Hove, Worthing and District Tramways Bill [H.L.] ; Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway (Various Powers) Bill ; Mid Yorkshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Sheffield Corporation Bill ; Shepshed Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.] ; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [H.L.] ; South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Strabane and Letterkenny Railway Bill ; Tynemouth and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Preston and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) Bill [H.L.] ; Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) Bill [H.L.]; Wigan Corporation Tramways Bill; Lanarkshire and Dumbartonshire Railway Bill ; Derby Gas Bill [H.L.]; Gosport, Fareham, and Cosham, Tramways Bill [H.L.] ; Wakefield and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill.—Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next 1478

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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TURKEY, No. 2 (1903).—Further correspondence respecting the affairs of South-Eastern Europe (reforms in the administration of the vilayets of Salonika, Monastir, and Kossovo) 1478

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—No. 2491. France (trade of French Guinea for 1901) 1478

CENSUS (SCOTLAND), 1901.—Eleventh decennial census of the population of Scotland, taken 31st March, 1901; with Report. (Vol. II.) 1478

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION.—Fifty-fifth Report from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England; with an Appendix 1479

LOCAL TAXATION.—Index to the Reports of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation... 1479

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN IRELAND (ROYAL COMMISSION).—Final Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the present conditions of the higher, general, and technical education available in Ireland outside Trinity College, Dublin; with an appendix; presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 1479

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION ACT, 1888.—Order made by the Board of Trade under the provisions of the Act for the variation of their order creating the Devon Sea Fisheries District, together with report by inspector on inquiry 1479

LEEWARD ISLANDS.—Amended prison rules relating to the employment of hard labour (male prisoners); laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1479

NEW BILL.

Electric Lighting (London) Bill (H.L.).—A Bill to provide for the adjustment in accordance with changes of boundary effected under the London Government Act, 1899, of the areas within which local authorities and companies are authorised to supply electricity.—Was presented by the Lord Wolverton; read 1ª, and to be printed. [No. 10.] 1479

ARMY ORGANISATION.

Earl Carrington 1479

Moved to resolve, "That in the opinion of this House, His Majesty's Government should reconsider their scheme of military organisation, having regard to the experience of the war in South Africa, and to the naval and military requirements of the Empire."—(*The Earl Carrington.*)

The Duke of Bedford 1489
The Under Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Hardwicke*) ... 1490
Lord Monkswell 1500
Lord Lovat 1507
The Earl of Aberdeen 1508
Lord Harris 1510
Lord Denman 1513
The First Lord of the Admiralty (*The Earl of Selborne*) 1517
Earl Spencer 1520
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 1529

On Question, their Lordships divided:—Contents, 15; Non-Contents, 51.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Nine o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 5TH MARCH, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.—The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz. :—

Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill.
Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill.

Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time 1537

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz. :—

Burgess Hill and St. John's Common Gas Bill.

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time 1538

Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill; Stoke Newington Borough Council Bill—Read a Second time, and committed 1538

PETITIONS.

BETTING.—Petition from Keynsham, for Legislation; to lie upon the Table ... 1538

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour: From Heriot; Ochiltree; Inch; Maybole; Kirkcowan; and Cardross; to lie upon the Table 1539

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petition from St. John's Wood, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1539

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION.—Copy presented, of Fifty-fifth Report from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, with an Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1539

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN IRELAND (ROYAL COMMISSION).—Copy presented, of Final Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the present conditions of the higher, general, and technical education available in Ireland outside Trinity College, Dublin, with an Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1539

LEEWARD ISLANDS.—Copy presented, of Amended Prison Rules relating to Employment of Hard Labour Male Prisoners [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1539

Papers laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House :—

INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES (ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF DURHAM). Further Return relative thereto [ordered 14th February, 1900; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to be printed. [No. 58.]

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INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES (COUNTY OF LANCASTER).—Further Return relative thereto [ordered 8th August, 1898; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to be printed. [No. 59.]

INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES (COUNTY OF WILTS).—Further Return relative thereto [ordered 9th August, 1901; *Mr. Griffith Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 60.]

CHARITABLE ENDOWMENTS (LONDON).—Further Return relative thereto [ordered 2nd August, 1894; *Mr. Francis Stevenson*]; to be printed. [No. 61.] ... 1539

LEAD POISONING IN EARTHENWARE AND CHINA WORKS.—Address for "Return of the cases of Lead Poisoning reported as occurring in China and Earthenware Works during the years 1899 to 1902, showing (1) the number of cases in the several classes of works and in the various processes, the number of persons employed, and the proportion of cases to persons employed; (2) the number of cases occurring in each month of the year; (3) particulars as to the character of the attacks; (4) the number of persons suspended in certain districts by the Certifying Surgeons (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 61, of Session 1902)."—(*Mr. Cochrane.*) ... 1540

INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES (COUNTY BOROUGH OF BARROW-IN-FURNESS).—Return ordered, "comprising (1) the Report made to the Charity Commissioners, in the result of an Inquiry held in the County Borough of Barrow-in-Furness into endowments, subject to the provisions of the Charitable Trusts Acts, 1853 to 1894, and appropriated in whole or in part for the benefit of that County Borough, or of any part thereof, together with the Report on those endowments of the Commissioners for inquiring concerning Charities, 1818 to 1837; (2) a Digest showing whether any, and, if any, what such endowments are recorded in the books of the Charity Commissioners in the County Borough; and (3) an Index, alphabetically arranged, of names and places mentioned in the Report."—(*Mr. Griffith Boscawen*) 1540

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

COOKERY TEACHERS' CERTIFICATES.—Question, Mr. Henry Hobhouse (Somersetshire, E.); Answer, Sir William Anson 1540

TYPHOID IN THE ISLAND OF LEWIS—CLOSING OF SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 1541

TYPHOID AT ROSS AND CROMARTY—CAUSE OF OUTBREAK.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 1541

CONSTRUCTION OF WALL AT SKEGERSTA PIER.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 1541

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Question, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1576

SELECTION STANDING COMMITTEES.—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure the following fifteen Members in respect of the Country Courts Jurisdiction Extension Bill:—Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Causton, Sir Henry Fowler, Mr. Garfit, Mr. Corrie Grant, Mr. Hatch, Mr. Kimber, Mr. Levy, Mr. Samuel Roberts, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Strutt, Mr. Tollemache, Mr. Tomkinson, and Mr. Eugene Wason.

Report to lie upon the Table 1576

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.—Mr. WILLIAM JONES, Member for North Carnarvonshire, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "the severe privation and loss arising from the struggle in the Penrhyn quarry district; the recent grave recommendations of the Carnarvonshire Standing Joint Committee in reporting thereon, and the failure to put into operation the provisions of the Conciliation Act to terminate the dispute;" and, the pleasure of the House having been signified, the Motion stood over, under Standing Order No. 10, until the Evening Sitting, this day 1576

NEW BILLS.

Church Discipline (No. 2) Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to Church Discipline," presented by Mr. Cripps; supported by Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. Vicary Gibbs, Mr. Laurence Hardy, Mr. Lyttelton, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Duke, Mr. Wharton, Sir John Dorington, Sir Francis Powell, and Mr. Griffith Boscawen; to be read a second time upon Friday, 13th March, and to be printed. [Bill 78.] 1577

Vaccination Bill.—"To amend the Vaccination Acts," presented by Mr. Broadhurst; supported by Mr. Thomas Bayley, Sir John Rolleston, Mr. Channing, and Mr. Corrie Grant; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 79.] 1577

Tied Houses (Abolition) Bill.—"To abolish Tied Houses," presented by Mr. Broadhurst; supported by Sir John Brunner, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Levy, Mr. Thomas Bayley, and Mr. Herbert Lewis; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 80.] 1577

Housing of Working Classes (Repayment of Loans) Bill.—"To extend the period for the repayment of Loans relating to the Housing of the Working Classes, and for other purposes connected therewith," presented by Mr. Claude Hay; supported by Sir J. Dickson Poynder, Sir John Gorst, Mr. Peel, Major Evans-Gordon, and Mr. Goulding; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 81.] 1577

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Local Government (Scotland) Act (1894) Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894," presented by Mr. Cathcart Wason; supported by Sir Andrew Agnew, Sir William Arrol, Mr. Alexander Cross, Colonel Denny, Mr. James Reid, Mr. John Dewar, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Harmsworth, Mr. Eugene Wason, and Mr. Weir; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 82.] ... 1577

Borough Funds Bill.—"To Amend The Borough Funds Act, 1872," presented by Mr. Walter Long; supported by Mr. Grant Lawson; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 83.] 1578

Land Tenure Bill.—"To amend the law relating to the Tenure of Land," presented by Mr. Lambert; supported by Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Soares, Mr. Allen, Mr. Mansfield, and Mr. Herbert Samuel; to be read a second time upon Friday, 13th March, and to be printed. [Bill 84.] 1578

Public Houses (Hours of Closing) (Scotland) Act (1887) Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Public Houses (Hours of Closing) (Scotland) Act, 1887," presented by Sir John Stirling Maxwell; supported by Sir William Dunn, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Bryce, Sir John Leng, Mr. Shaw-Stewart, and Mr. Hunter Craig; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 85.] 1578

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).—Ordered, "That this day the Motion on the Paper relating to the appointment of the Committee of Defence have precedence of the Committee of Supply."—(*Mr. Balfour.*) 1578

THE COMMITTEE OF DEFENCE.

The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) 1578

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the growing needs of the Empire require the establishment of the Committee of Defence on a permanent footing."—(*Mr. Balfour.*)

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (*Stirling Burghs*) 1586

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Sir. H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Mr. A. J. Balfour 1592
Mr. Kearley (*Devonport*) 1592
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 1594
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*)... 1594
Mr. Edmund Robertson (*Dundee*) 1594

Question put, and negatived.

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. Arthur Lee (*Hampshire, Fareham*) 1595
Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 1602
Sir John Colomb (*Great Yarmouth*) 1609
Mr. Edmund Robertson 1612
Col. Sandys (*Lancashire, Bootle*) 1617
Mr. Broadhurst (*Leicester*)... 1620
Mr. Gibson Bowles... 1626

Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.) ... 1633
Major Evans Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) ... 1637
Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) ... 1638
Major Rasch (Essex, Chelmsford) ... 1643
Mr. Stevenson (Suffolk, Eye) ... 1644
Mr. Reginald Lucas (Portsmouth) ... 1647

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That, in the opinion of the House, the growing needs of the Empire require the establishment of the Committee of Defence on a permanent footing."

Naval Forces Bill.—Read a second time, and Committed for Monday next.

And, there being no further Business set down for the Afternoon Sitting, Mr. Speaker left the Chair until this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

THE PENRHYN QUARRY DISPUTE—MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. William Jones (Carnarvonshire, Arfon) ... 1649
Mr. Bryn Roberts (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) ... 1658

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn." *(Mr. William Jones.)*

Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) ... 1661
Sir John Brunner (Cheshire, Northwich) ... 1664
Sir Alfred Thomas (Glamorganshire, E.) ... 1664
Mr. John Wilson (Durham, Mid) ... 1666
Mr. Middlemore (Birmingham, N.) ... 1667
Mr. Bromley Davenport (Cheshire, Macclesfield) ... 1668
The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1668
Mr. Lloyd George (Carnarvon Boroughs) ... 1672
Mr. Bell (Derby) ... 1675
Mr. Lawson Walton (Leeds, S.) ... 1677
Col. Pryce Jones (Montgomeryshire Boroughs) ... 1678
Mr. Tennant (Berwickshire) ... 1679

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 127; Noes, 157. (Division List No. 16.)

Incest Bill.

Colonel Lockwood (Essex, Epping) ... 1683
Mr. Haldane (Haddingtonshire) ... 1683
Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) ... 1684
The Attorney General (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs) ... 1684

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Cruelty to Animals Bill.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [2nd March]. "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed:—Debate resumed.

Mr. Caldwell ... 1684

And it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed this day.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS (KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENTS ROOMS).—Ordered, that a Select Committee be appointed to control the arrangements for the Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms in the Department of the Serjeant-at-Arms attending this House.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of—Mr. James Bailey, Mr. Broadhurst, Sir Harry Bullard, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Dalziel, Sir Horatio Davies, Sir Thomas Firbank, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Leigh-Bennett, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Lonsdale, Dr. MacDonnell, Mr. Nicol, Mr. George Ormsby-Gore, Mr. Pierpoint, Mr. Power, and Mr. William Redmond.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That three be the quorum.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*) ... 1685

PUBLIC PETITIONS.—Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed, to whom shall be referred all Petitions presented to the House, with the exception of such as relate to Private Bills; and that such Committee do classify and prepare abstracts of the same, in such form and manner as shall appear to them best suited to convey to the House all requisite information respecting their contents, and do report the same from time to time to the House; and that the reports of the Committee do set forth the number of signatures to each Petition only in respect to those signatures to which addresses are affixed. And that such Committee have power to direct the printing *in extenso* of such Petitions, or of such parts of Petitions, as shall appear to require it; and that such Committee have power to report their opinion and observations thereupon to the House.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of—Mr. Allsopp, Mr. Edward Barry, Mr. Brymer, Sir Charles Dalrymple, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, General Laurie, Mr. Herbert Lewis, Sir Henry Meysey-Thompson, Mr. Charles Morley, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Tollemache, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, and Mr. Henry Joseph Wilson.

Ordered, That three be the quorum.—(*Sir Alexander Acland--Hood.*) ... 1686

Adjourned at three minutes after Twelve o'clock.

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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(*AUTHORISED EDITION*)

IN THE

FOURTH SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, IN THE
THIRD YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 17*th February*, 1903.

THE KING'S SPEECH.

THE KING, being seated on the Throne, and the Commons being at the Bar with their Speaker, His Majesty was pleased to make a most gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, and then retired.

His Majesty's Speech was as follows—

"*My Lords and Gentlemen*,

"My relations with all the Foreign Powers continue to be friendly.

"The blockade of Venezuelan ports, rendered necessary by outrages on the British flag and wrongs inflicted on the persons and property of British subjects by the Venezuelan Government, has led to negotiations for the adjustment of all the matters in dispute. I rejoice that a settlement has now been arrived at which has justified the blockading Powers in bringing all hostile naval operations to an immediate close. Papers on the subject have been laid before you.

"Negotiations have taken place for the adjustment of the questions which have arisen with regard to the boundary between My possessions in North America and the territory of Alaska. A treaty providing for the reference of these questions to an Arbitral Tribunal has been signed and ratified.

"The condition of the European provinces of Turkey gives cause for serious anxiety. I have used My best efforts to impress upon the Sultan and his Ministers the urgent need for practical and well-considered measures of reform. The Governments of Austria-Hungary and Russia have had under their consideration what reforms it would be desirable that the Powers who were parties to the Treaty of Berlin should recommend to the Sultan for immediate adoption. I trust that the proposals made will prove to be sufficient for the purpose, and that I shall find it possible to give them My hearty support. Papers on the subject will be laid before you.

"I regret that the efforts which My Government have been making to arrive at a joint delimitation with the Turkish Government of the boundaries of the tribal country adjoining Aden have hitherto failed to bring about a settlement. Negotiations upon this subject are being urgently pressed forward.

"A body of My troops, including a small corps of mounted infantry raised from the inhabitants of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, has been disembarked at Obbia, in Italian Somaliland, to operate against the Mullah Abdullah, and an advance inland is about to be made. The co-operation of the Italian Government in this undertaking has been most cordial, and I trust that as a result of these operations the tribes of both Protectorates may be secured from further molestation.

"The progress of events in South Africa has been satisfactory. The visit of the Secretary of State for the Colonies to that portion of My dominions has already been productive of the happiest results; and the opportunity which it has provided for personal conference with Lord Milner, with the Ministers of the self-governing Colonies, and with the representatives of all interests and opinions, has greatly conduced to the smooth adjustment of many difficult questions, and to the removal of many occasions of misunderstanding.

"It has been found necessary to send an expedition to Kano in consequence of the hostile action of the Emir of that place. My troops have successfully occupied his capital, and I trust that it will now become possible to proceed in safety with the delimitation of the boundary between My territory of Northern Nigeria and the adjoining possessions of the French Republic. Papers upon this subject will at once be presented.

"My succession to the Imperial Crown of India has been proclaimed and celebrated in an assembly of unexampled splendour at Delhi. I there received from the feudatory Princes and Chiefs, and from all classes of the peoples within My Indian dominions, gratifying marks of their loyalty and devotion to My Throne and family. I am glad to be able to state that this imposing ceremony has coincided, in point of time, with the disappearance of drought and agricultural distress in Western India, and that the prospects both of agriculture and commerce throughout My Indian Empire are more encouraging and satisfactory than they have been for some years past.

"*Gentlemen of the House of Commons,*

"The Estimates for the coming year will be laid before you. Although they have been framed with due regard to economy, the needs of the Country and of the Empire make a large expenditure inevitable.

"*My Lords and Gentlemen,*

"A Bill will be laid before you which will, I trust, complete the series of measures which have already done much to substitute single ownership for the costly and unsatisfactory conditions still attaching to the Tenure of Agricultural Land over a large portion of Ireland.

"Proposals will be submitted to you for completing the scheme of Educational Reform passed last session by extending and adapting it to the Metropolitan area.

"Measures will be introduced for the purpose of carrying into effect engagements arising out of the Convention for the Abolition of Bounties on Sugar which has recently been ratified at Brussels; and for guaranteeing a Loan to be raised for the Development of My new Colonies in South Africa.

"A Bill will be laid before you for Improving the Administration of the Port and Docks of London, the condition of which is a matter of National concern.

"A measure Amending and Consolidating the Licensing Laws in Scotland is greatly desired in that country, and I trust will pass into Law.

"Measures will also be proposed to you for Improving the Law of Valuation and Assessment; for Regulating the Employment of Children; for dealing with the Sale of Adulterated Dairy Produce; for Amending the Law relating to Savings Banks; and for Reconstituting the Royal Patriotic Fund Commission.

"I pray that the guidance and blessing of Almighty God may direct all your labours."

NEW PEERS INTRODUCED.

Randall, Thomas, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury was (in the usual manner) introduced.

John, Lord Bishop of St. Davids, was (in the usual manner) introduced.

SAT FIRST.

The Lord Acton sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

ROLL OF THE LORDS.

Norroy King of Arms attending, delivered at the Table (in the usual manner) a List of the Lords Temporal in the Fourth Session of the Twenty-seventh Parliament of the United Kingdom; the same was ordered to lie on the Table.

SELECT VESTRIES.

Bill, *pro formâ*, read 1ª.

THE KING'S SPEECH.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

THE DUKE OF ROXBURGHE: My Lords, I rise to move that an humble Address be presented to His Majesty in reply to the gracious Speech from the Throne. In doing so I avail myself of the ancient tradition of your Lordships' House, which allows this task to be undertaken by even the least accomplished of its Members. I fully realise the difficulties of my position, but gain encouragement when I remember that this duty has been performed under similar circumstances by many noble Lords, who will readily grant me that indulgence which they received in their time. We are assured that our relations with foreign Powers are friendly. This is a familiar term, but none the less comforting in view of the Venezuela difficulty. This difficulty arose owing to the outrages committed on British subjects and British shipping, which rendered it necessary that His Majesty's Government should seek satisfaction and demand a guarantee against a continuance of this state of affairs. To this end the noble Marquess, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, when approached by the German Ambassador, whose country had similar causes of complaint, informed him that His Majesty's Government were prepared to take joint action until the claims of both countries had been satisfied. This very natural course has been most severely criticised, and somewhat inaccurately described as a debt collecting process. It has further been stated that our action was likely to jeopardise our hitherto very friendly relations with the United States. No one can value more highly than His Majesty's Government the friendship of the Government and people of the United States of America; but the friendship of a people so intelligent and so practical is not likely to be secured by an attitude which would appear to indicate on our part any desire to obtain it by unworthy concessions, or by any indifference to the just claims of our own people. I feel confident that they will not regard with unfriendly eyes our efforts to secure for British subjects that justice and redress which they would demand for their own citizens.

The question of the Alaskan boundary is one of great complexity, depending as it does upon the interpretation of a treaty couched in somewhat ambiguous terms, and concluded more than seventy years ago, when the geographical features of that country were very little known. It has, however, of late assumed a more prominent position owing to the discovery of gold in Klondyke, and any steps towards the settlement of a question which might have involved us in serious difficulty with the United States must be welcomed by both countries.

The condition of the European provinces of Turkey has for the last two years given increased cause for anxiety, both on political and humanitarian grounds. It is, nevertheless, satisfactory to note that the great Powers, and especially those two which, on account of their geographical position, are most closely interested and best able to exercise influence in the region of the Balkan States, should have devoted themselves seriously to the task of promoting a better condition of affairs in these sorely-tried districts. I feel confident that His Majesty's Government will render freely every assistance towards the promotion of any well-considered measures for this purpose.

We must all rejoice that in the military measures which we have been forced to take for the security of our Protectorate in Somaliland we have been working in complete accord with the Government of Italy. The interests of the two nations in that region are identical, and it is earnestly to be hoped that our cooperation there may tend to still further prolong that friendly feeling which so happily exists.

Reference has been made in the gracious Speech from the Throne to the mission of the Colonial Secretary, undertaken with a view of bringing about, at the earliest moment, the reconciliation and union of the Dutch and English races, with due consideration to the interests of the coloured people. The immediate outcome of the right hon. Gentleman's arrival in Natal was the voluntary surrender by that colony of all claim to compensation for losses sustained during the war. As your Lordships will remember, these were heavy, and amounted in all to £2,000,000. Surely this is no mean sacrifice. Proceeding to the Transvaal, the Colonial Secretary discussed with the leading representatives of the mining interest what sum they would willingly undertake to contribute as their share towards the cost of the war. This sum was fixed at £30,000,000, payable in three years, but in return, a guarantee was requested for £35,000,000 to be applied to existing obligations and to the further development of the country. In Cape Colony the Colonial Secretary addressed many meetings, warning Cape politicians of the danger they incurred by allowing the loyalty of their colony to be doubted. The main objects of his mission have already been attained, and the Boers are convinced that not even their natural pertinacity will extract further concessions from Great Britain, whose earnest desire is to welcome them as new partners of the Empire, to protect them in the enjoyment of religious and civil liberty, and to develop the vast resources of their country.

The celebration of the succession of His Majesty to the Imperial Crown of India has been remarkable, not only for the brilliancy of its ceremonies and pageants, but even more so for the cordiality and unanimity with which the Chiefs and Princes of India, and, indeed, all races in that country, have availed themselves of the opportunity of expressing their loyalty to the British Crown, and their gratitude for the benefits they derive from British rule. It is also most satisfying to note that the occasion of these celebrations has been marked by the expression of a confident hope on the part of the Indian Government that they may shortly be able to somewhat alleviate the burden of taxation in that country.

His Majesty's Speech makes mention of a Bill for extending and adapting to the Metropolitan area the scheme of educational reform passed last session. It is a matter for congratulation that, notwithstanding the bitter differences of opinion and somewhat acute controversies which marked the discussions on the Education Bill last session, the new authorities, whether county or municipal councils, are prepared to assume the duties assigned to them in that Act in a loyal and patriotic spirit. The peculiar conditions of the Metropolis, which as to local government differ so materially from those which prevail both in our counties and large towns, render the education problem in London one of no small difficulty. It is earnestly to be hoped that it may not be rendered more difficult by a revival of those controversial discussions which somewhat protracted your Lordships' proceedings last year, but that Members may be prepared to accept the principles of the present Act as having been settled, at least for the moment. I thank your Lordships for the gracious hearing you have accorded me, and beg to move.

* THE EARL OF LEITRIM: My Lords, in rising to second the Address I must ask your Lordships to grant me a full measure of that kind consideration which you have always extended to those who have the privilege of addressing you for the first time. Not wishing to traverse the ground so well covered by the noble Duke, I will at once pass to that portion of the gracious Speech from the Throne referring to the question of land purchase in Ireland. The system of land tenure in Ireland—practically that of dual ownership—having been found to lead to litigation, confusion, and inconvenience almost amounting to impracticability, His Majesty's Government is desirous of bringing forward a large and comprehensive measure, sufficiently large to cover the primary object of turning judicial tenants into occupying owners, and especially adapted to meet,

as they may arise, the many difficulties which such an operation will entail, and a measure, moreover, which can be expected to accomplish this without protracted delay. It must be a source of satisfaction to your Lordships to know that under the present procedure 80,000 tenants have already purchased their holdings, and that the result has proved a success. But the operation cannot be arrested at this juncture, and further steps are required to terminate the perpetual litigation caused by dual ownership.

Neither landlords nor tenants can be expected to expend either their capital or their labour for the improvement of agriculture when every fifteen years it has to be decided in a court of law, by State-paid officials, what return they are to have for doing so, and the country cannot prosper when men's minds are concentrated on a judicial war. The landlords of Ireland yield to none in their love for their country and in the desire that she should prosper and be part and parcel of this great Empire: rejoicing to concur loyally in what is best for her welfare, so long as it does not mean placing them in such circumstances as would necessitate their leaving that country; so long, as it does not mean injustice. As, however, it has been found desirable to put an end to dual ownership, it is equally desirable to so effect the change that it may enable those, who have ever been loyal to their Sovereign and their country, to live among and promote the welfare of their own people, with whom, in spite of the adverse circumstances of land-tenure, their relations as landlord and tenant have been in several instances of so cordial a nature. It would be wrong of me as an Irishman to neglect to call your Lordships' attention to the tendency which exists among Irish farmers of sub-dividing their already small holdings, an evil which the landlords up to now have done all in their power to prevent, and which, in the event of the tenant purchasing his holding, is guarded against until such time as the entire sum of the purchase money shall have been paid, after which date there is no guarantee that a tenant will not sub-divide his holding. Doubtless His Majesty's able Chief Secretary for Ireland will give this matter his consideration.

I should like to dwell for a few moments on other interests besides that of land tenure which are occupying the hearts of Irishmen. Industries have been established throughout the country, and the spirit of co-operation for furthering the interests of trade is increasing. From the North and West a debt of gratitude is due for the grant to be expended under the Marine Works Act. This will go far to promote not only the large fisheries instituted there, but also the use of small trading steamers for the conveyance of the produce of the country to the markets of Great Britain, which has proved so successful in other parts. There is also another large opening for the North-west as being specially adapted for inter-communication with America, from which such great benefits can be anticipated. It is these and similar objects, which tend to advance the commercial prosperity of the Empire, that all Irishmen, whatever their political opinions, should have at heart.

There is another Bill mentioned in the gracious Speech to which I should like to refer—namely, that dealing with the Port and Docks of London. That is a question of the most intricate nature, and of vital importance to the commerce of the nation. We may hope that a public trust may be formed with such powers as will enable it to deal with the necessary duties entailed by the vast increase of our trade, and to be responsible for the policy of the river, but, at the same time, to steer clear of all matters connected with private enterprise.

I think the remaining points in the gracious Speech from the Throne require no further comment from me. But, in conclusion, I should like to return to the subject of my fellow countrymen, and to recall to your Lordships' memories the gallant behaviour of the Irish troops in South Africa, which called forth such a spontaneous mark of sympathy and approval from our late beloved Sovereign—so much so that one of the last great acts of her long and glorious reign was to visit their country, where a welcome awaited her such as only Irishmen know how to give; and if the proposed welcome visit of His Most Gracious Majesty to Ireland were to become an accomplished fact, it would go far to bring into closer touch the sincerely loyal hearts of my countrymen with the Throne and the

Empire at large. I thank your Lordships for the kind forbearance with which you have listened to my remarks, and beg to second the Address.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty in reply to the gracious Speech from the Throne."—(*Duke of Roxburghe.*)

* EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I have to congratulate the noble Lords who were entrusted with the duty of opening the first debate in your Lordships' House in the present session. I can do so with perfect sincerity. We always listen with pleasure to those who for the first time address this House. We do so because, often, we know them personally, or because, more often in the case of older men like myself, we have known their predecessors, and always because we welcome the introduction of fresh blood in our debates. I think your Lordships will agree with me that the noble Duke and the noble Earl acquitted themselves with exceeding good taste and exceeding ability. I would only make this one criticism, that they were too brief in what they said. Their remarks were full of good sense and of admirable quality, and they might have continued them at greater length. One of the noble Lords represents the northern part of Great Britain, and we welcome him here. The other represents the sister kingdom of Ireland, with which I for one have been so much connected. That country has been, and is, strongly represented in this House, and I think its representatives will welcome the addition to their ranks of one who has such large interests in that country and its welfare so much at heart.

It will be my duty to touch on various parts of the gracious Speech from the Throne, but I hope I shall not exceed the limits of such an occasion as the present one. The first remark I have to make is upon a matter of very great importance. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has, on more than one occasion, in answer to Questions which I have addressed to him, dilated upon our relations with Russia and China, and also upon affairs in the Far East. It is of good augury that no reference is made either to China or to Russia in His Majesty's Speech. I trust from that that the information which is at the disposal of the Foreign Office is satisfactory in this respect, and that our relations with Russia and with all the Powers interested in the Far East are eminently satisfactory.

The Earl of Leitrim.

Now, my Lords, I come to a question which for some months past has been occupying most deeply the attention of the nation. I refer to Venezuela. I rejoice with the noble Duke who referred to the settlement of that question. But why has it been such a matter of anxiety? For two reasons, which I shall shortly give. We in this country are very jealous now of anything that might disturb our good relations with the United States of America. We felt that a subject like this might involve great questions between us and that Republic, and we were very anxious that we should not in any way diminish the good feeling which, happily, has sprung up within the last few years between that country and ourselves. There was also a fear that we might, by co-operating with another Power, be led into considerable difficulty. Now, with regard to that, I at once say that, though I know there has been considerable ill-feeling in Germany and in this country against one another, I for one would hail with joy and satisfaction anything which would bring about a better feeling between this country and Germany. Therefore, in the remarks which I make I am not going to say anything that might detract from the good feeling which, I hope, now exists between us. But I must make some criticisms upon these proceedings, because, in my opinion, there are questions upon modes of operations which might lead in future to considerable difficulties. I shall pass over the first cause for which we had to seek reparation from Venezuela. I imagine there are few people in this country who will criticise His Majesty's Government for taking steps to get reparation for certain outrages on ships and on British subjects by that Power. We all agree that that was necessary. But we have some doubt whether joint action in these matters may not, unless very carefully guarded, bring about very disastrous results. In my opinion, His Majesty's Government have been backward in one respect, and that in that respect they have committed an error which to a great extent intensified the anxiety which existed. They have not early enough put us into possession of all the despatches and all the communications which have been made between them and the two Powers. First of all there is the communication with the United States. It was of the utmost importance that we should know that we had a thorough and complete understanding with that Power before we entered upon these proceedings. Then, with regard to the co-operation with Germany, there are some very important considerations to be kept in view.

It strikes me as an exceedingly difficult thing for two countries to co-operate to make claims—both from their own point of view—on a particular country, and unite absolutely in getting reparation. First of all, there is this point. Have we exactly the same claim to make as the other country? If two countries act together and demand reparation for injuries done to them, each country must know thoroughly what the other country is demanding. It may be that one country may demand things from the Power that has been offending them which the other Power could not possibly give. The last despatches which have been laid before your Lordships may show this, but we do not see clearly how this has been defined and arranged between the two Powers. I must complain of this—I do not say it is the fault of His Majesty's Government — that we only have the later Papers on this subject put into our hands at the very last moment. I certainly found that a friend of mine in the House of Commons had them, but I only found that out when it was too late to refer to them effectually. The actual Papers only came into my hands when I came into your Lordships' House. That puts a great difficulty in our way in considering this question; and I hope some steps will be taken, when important matters of this sort are brought forward, that your Lordships may have the whole information which is given by the Government speedily and in proper time before they have to take up the matter for consideration.

Now, my Lords, with regard to this, I should rather like to ask certain questions. I understand that reparation has often been asked, and has been asked in this case, for injuries done to ships, or property, or the persons of British subjects; but on no former occasion, so far as I know, has any reparation been asked for deficiencies in payment by public bonds or railways in a foreign country. I am very doubtful as to how we stand in regard to this. So far as I know, during the last session, in another place, it was always stated that no demands were made on Venezuela for non-payment of bonds, or other matters of that kind. Well, in the Papers which have now been submitted to us I find, as far as I can understand, that is not the case; that we have been demanding, with the Germans, certain payments with regard to the railway bonds of Venezuela. In that respect there is, I conceive, a new departure in the foreign policy of this country. Have we ever sought to recover bad debts for private individuals who may have embarked their capital in consideration of high interest in Venezuela?

I should like to make another remark upon this, although there has been some new light thrown upon it in the despatches issued today—I am surprised that His Majesty's Government did not press earlier for the reference of this dispute to The Hague tribunal. So far as I can make out now the settlement is tripartite. The President consents to pay down certain sums to the two countries for certain claims; for certain other claims there is a mixed commission to be appointed, with an umpire to be appointed by the President of the United States; and, thirdly, there is the reference to The Hague tribunal. I should like to ask, considering the importance of the institution of The Hague tribunal, and the desirability of submitting to it every case that can be submitted by a country without sacrificing national honour—why an earlier reference to The Hague tribunal was not made in this case. I readily admit, and agree, that now certain matters have been referred to that tribunal; but in my view it seems most unfortunate that this was not done at an earlier date. In that case, as I think the noble Marquess states in one of his despatches, a much earlier deliverance from the blockade could have been brought about, and all the dangers and bitterness, and the results of force being used, would have been removed. I merely wish to ask these specific questions of His Majesty's Government, which seem to me of some importance. I repeat that I rejoice exceedingly that this dispute, arising, no doubt, out of just grounds, but really amounting to a very small affair—though it might have given rise to very serious difficulties between us and other countries—has been successfully brought to an end. I sincerely hope that that settlement will be entirely satisfactory, and that it will tend to good feeling being established between this country, Germany, and the United States.

The next point is one on which I can heartily congratulate His Majesty's Government. We know that for many years there have been grave difficulties from time to time with regard to a very difficult question—namely, the boundaries between Alaska and Canada. I need not go into the history of the past; but attempts have been made more than once to come to a satisfactory settlement about that; and I rejoice to see that, at all events, the United States and this country have now agreed upon referring this question to a Commission. I sincerely trust that that Commission will be able satisfactorily to dispose of this matter, which might raise great difficulty between ourselves and our American cousins. I next see an allusion in the Speech from the Throne to a matter which in years gone by has caused wars and the greatest difficulties in Europe—I refer to the question of Macedonia. I notice that His Majesty's Government promise that Papers will be laid before us. We have had at present very little information about it. At the same time, those who are interested in foreign affairs have probably had before them public Papers from other Governments which throw a great deal of light upon this subject. There is a very interesting Yellow-book which has been issued by the French Government. Anybody who has studied that book will see that a very grave and serious position of affairs has arisen in Macedonia. I am not surprised, after reading that book, to find these words put into His Majesty's mouth—

> "The condition of the European provinces of Turkey gives cause for serious anxiety."

My Lords, if you have read these Papers you will have seen that there is abroad in Macedonia a feeling of unrest and dissatisfaction, and a feeling of acute grievance existing, which has not existed to so large an extent for many years past. There have been risings, and lives have been lost in skirmishes between the Turkish constabulary and the rebels. There has been a great disturbance of feeling caused in Bulgaria, where so many people from Macedonia go, and where the interests of Macedonia are very much felt. There are also evidences of a large collection of forces on the part of the Sultan, and also on the part of the Bulgarians. It seems to me there is all the evidence that these Powers consider that a very grave state of things may arise, and that force may have to be resorted to for the quieting of these districts. Anyone who has any interest in these matters, who considers what the Government of Turkey is, will be in despair as to the way in which Turkey fulfils, not only its obligations under such engagements as the Berlin Treaty, but its other engagements as to good government which it ought to maintain. We hear the news, which seems to be confirmed, that two of the Great Powers, Russia and Austria-Hungary, have made proposals to Turkey with the view to putting an end to the troubles of those unfortunate people who are under Turkish rule in that part of the Turkish Empire. I regard with some satisfaction the indications which are given that His Majesty's Government are inclined to foster the representations of those two Powers. But what the Government say in the Speech from the Throne does not, I must say, inspire me with great hopes; but I sincerely trust that His Majesty's Government will do their very utmost to support those two great Powers, and try as far as they can to moderate and improve the existing state of things in that part of the world.

The next point to which I wish to refer in a very few words is the expedition, which, I regret, is still going on, or is about to take place—I hardly know which—in Somaliland. We know very little about the business. All we know is that a certain Mullah exercises great power there, and that we intend to attack him and to destroy his power. But, unfortunately, it appears that the Government, or those responsible in that district, did not sufficiently gauge the power of that man, and that an insufficient force was sent out to cope with him, so that we suffered something like what, I am sorry to say, was a reverse. I need say no more; but we should like to know what the present position may lead to. It was not long ago that the Prime Minister made a speech at Liverpool, and he referred to this subject, using words which I cannot help thinking are, or may be, ominous. Among other things he said, after referring to the loss of life and comparing the expedition with another, that the result of the present expedition might be very far-reaching. Those were, I think, his words. But what was the meaning of the words? Are we going to occupy any vast tract of desert? Are we going to employ our forces, many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of miles in the interior of a wild country of very great extent, and are we going to occupy and hold that country, of which we know very little? I think Parliament has some right and some reason to ask what we are doing there and what we intend to do.

I now come to the more pleasing question of South Africa and the speeches made there by the Colonial Secretary. Now, I should like to say this at once, that personally I do not think it a desirable thing if the heads of our great offices were to become travelling secretaries and were to be continually going to and fro gathering such information as they could in distant parts of the world. At the same time, there are exceptions to the rule I suggest; and we have had a notable instance within our recollection. The last instance, I think, was when the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) whom I am glad to see in the House tonight, and the Prime Minister of that day, went to Berlin and took part in an important conference there. But, as I have said, I cannot approve of those who are responsible to the nation for the conduct of affairs continually leaving the country and taking such a part in affairs as may seriously interfere with the responsibilities of those who are the governors and managers of affairs of distant countries. But, having said that, I wish at once to add that this is a very exceptional case. We had just concluded a great war, and the country was beyond doubt in a very difficult condition. There were conflicting questions of finance and questions as to labour and other matters which had to be settled; and I confess that I admire the energy, the will, and the ability of the Colonial Secretary in his endeavours to bring things to a happy conclusion. Whatever the Party to which we belong—and the Party that I belong to have never admired the policy of the Government or of the Colonial Secretary in South Africa—we all sincerely desire the success of the efforts of the Colonial Secretary to bring about an agreement between the rival races there, and so arrive at a happy solution of the existing difficulties, and so bring about what we all desire—good government in South Africa. It is not possible for us to go into the questions which have been before the Secretary of State during his journey; we only know what has been done through the newspaper reports. We have no official Papers with regard to what has been done by the Colonial Secretary in South Africa, and it requires consideration and time before we can take a full view of the subject. No doubt it may well be that it will be necessary for Parliament to take these matters into consideration when they come fully before us, and I hope that the Papers will be very full.

I come now to the next subject—the occupation of Kano. Well, we know that this apparently large town has been occupied; but we know little beyond that. I may express the hope, however, that we shall have no more trouble with the tribes in that district, or any difficulties—African or European. Now I come to the latter part of the gracious Speech of His Majesty, in which we are told of those measures which the Government are going to bring before Parliament this session. I notice, first, the reference to Ireland. There is a statement in the gracious Speech that the Government intend to deal with the land question in that country. I have been intimately connected for many years with that subject, and I know it is a difficult one. It appears to me that His Majesty's Government have great courage, and are exceedingly sanguine in what they say with regard to that subject.

The question of Irish land has been before Parliament for many years—for forty or fifty years. Government after Government have tried their hands at it, and they thought they might go a good way toward a final settlement of it—but they have never succeeded in this. I fully agree as to the enormous importance of this question being settled, and I hope that the Government are not taking too sanguine a view when they say that they hope their Bill will make a final settlement. I have noticed with some satisfaction what has taken place recently in Ireland on this question, but I do not know enough to formulate any definite opinion. I cannot say whether the proposal to which the noble Earl who presided over the conference of owners and occupiers of land in Ireland has given his assent should be accepted; but it is a matter of great importance that two parties who have been for so many years in antagonism should be able to come together and to discuss a question of this enormous magnitude in an amicable manner, and come to what appears to be a satisfactory conclusion. I shall not go into the question at greater length now; but I need hardly say that if on sound financial and political grounds we can approve of the Bill of the Government we shall be glad to do so, and so remove one of the great difficulties of recent years.

The noble Duke referred to another matter—the question of the Education Bill for London, and he expressed a hope with regard to that Bill. I am afraid in that the noble Duke was a little too sanguine. I have always said that it was the duty of those connected with educational and local bodies to do all they could to work out the principles of the Act of last year within the Act, and not to try to force changes not to be found in the Act. At the same time, I maintain the strongest feelings of opposition to many of the principles contained in the Act of last year, and at every legitimate opportunity—at elections and in Parliament—I shall endeavour, and the Party to which I belong will, I believe, do the same, to carry out our views and effect a modification of that Act. Feeling this, I cannot concur in the opinion that because local authorities are doing their duty, and trying to work, as smoothly as they can, the Education Act of last year, we should abstain from opposition to those principles when the London Bill is brought forward. As the noble Duke has said, the position of London is exceptional from its enormous extent and its local conditions, so different from those of other great communities in relation to education matters. No doubt London must be treated in a somewhat different way from that in which other localities have been treated. But, at the same time, without going into the matter now, I maintain that the great principles which our Party advocated last year still hold the field; and we shall endeavour to have those principles carried out in dealing with the great Metropolis. We shall certainly not tamely submit to the imposition upon London of those conditions in regard to education which we strongly resisted last year when they were applied to the rest of the country.

I come now to another topic, which I consider of great moment, and that is the Convention for the Abolition of Sugar Bounties, lately ratified. We had but a short discussion on the subject in this House before the ratification, though in the other House there was a long debate and a division. Now, I should like to know what has taken place since the ratification. According to the treaty, His Majesty's Government were, if not bound to offer their good offices, bound to bring the Convention before our self-governing colonies with the hope that they would follow the lead of the mother country and do away with bounties. I should like very much to know whether His Majesty's Government have communicated with the self-governing colonies and received answers from them. I would go further, and call attention to what has been said abroad in various Assemblies in regard to this very important matter. What are His Majesty's Government prepared to do in case the Brussels Commission declares that certain of our colonies give direct or indirect bounties? Of course, so far as I know, it is perfectly clear a good many do this; and what will His Majesty's Government do in that respect? Will this country impose countervailing duties against its own colonies? This matter has been referred to in various ways; it has been referred to in Berlin, it has been referred to at The Hague, and there have been many comments made. I saw in a newspaper, not long ago, a report that the Dutch Government agreed with Germany and Austria that Great Britain was bound to take this course. Some papers say it was made the subject of a proviso that Great Britain would not penalise her bounty-giving colonies. The German Secretary for Foreign Affairs stated in the Reichstag that, while holding the

British Government bound as above stated, the European Powers had held the question over until after the ratification, because it would then be decided by the Brussels Convention, on which Great Britain would only have one representative. It was incidentally remarked that the "lion's tail was trodden upon." This is an important matter, upon which I think we are entitled to ask for information. I have in my hand papers from the West Indies which show that those colonies are waking up to the fact that, instead of doing them good, the Convention will almost destroy their trade in sugar. The colonists are up in arms and say, "We are Crown colonies, forced to do without bounties, direct or indirect, and at the same time self-governing colonies are going on just as they were." This is an important matter, and I press it in the hope of getting an answer tonight.

There are other portions of His Majesty's Speech I might refer to, such as the London port and dock proposals and the improvement in the law of valuation and assessment, and as to the latter I should like to know what it means. It might be a very far-reaching measure, or it might go a very short way. I have on a previous occasion spoken of the interest taken in the proceedings of the Commission presided over by the noble Lord the Secretary for Scotland, and I hardly think the Government will have the courage to go to the extent of the report of that Commission. Having touched upon these matters referred to in His Majesty's Speech, I feel it my duty to mention one subject which has been omitted, although I might allude to several others. There is no mention whatever of what His Majesty's Government intend to do in regard to reform and reorganisation of the Army. There is a very deep feeling throughout the country upon this subject. A plan was put forward and met with much criticism, a plan copied from foreign models and not adapted to our requirements, a plan for the establishment of army corps all over the country. That plan was an exceedingly expensive one, and in the opinion of many would not fulfil the requirements for our Army. As I understand, the organisation exists on paper only; generals have been appointed to divisions, and even to army corps, and have no soldiers, or very few, under their command. This is a very serious matter, this question of army organisation; and I think we should know what has taken place and what His Majesty's Government intend to do. Of course we have gained a great deal of knowledge and experience from the late war, and the Commission presided over by Lord Elgin ought to provide very valuable assistance. Unfortunately, the country knows very little of the proceedings of that Commission, for they have practically been conducted in secret, and we do not know the nature of the evidence given. I hope the Government will, if not tonight, then at an early date, make some statement on the subject. It is without doubt a matter in which the country takes the deepest interest. We require an army for general purposes, a regular army as efficient as it can possibly be made in the various arms, an army not on an extravagant scale. At the same time, we require a defensive army for the country in case of invasion. I cannot say more on the subject tonight, and conclude, expressing the hope that full information will be forthcoming.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Duke of DEVONSHIRE): My Lords, I must express my entire and cordial concurrence with the well-merited tribute paid to the ability and good taste with which the difficult, and I am afraid sometimes thankless, task of moving and seconding the Address in answer to the Speech from the Throne has been discharged by my two noble friends. The noble Earl has remarked upon the brevity of their speeches. Both my noble friends are fortunately extremely young men; and I admit that it is quite possible that had the duty been placed in the hands of more experienced Members of the House the topics adverted to in the Speech might have been touched upon at greater length and with less diffidence than has been exhibited by my two noble friends. But I am sure your Lordships will agree that it is a very great advantage that men occupying hereditary positions in this House, and who have before them, both in this House and in the country, large opportunities of devoting themselves to political and other work, should as early as possible be introduced to the performance of public duties. I am quite certain that the speeches of my two noble friends will leave no doubt in our minds that they will in future prove valuable and useful Members of this assembly. The noble Earl made something in the nature of a complaint about the multiplicity of topics adverted to in the Speech from the Throne. I do not think he has shown that any of those subjects were superfluous. If the Speech is, as I admit it is, a long one, I think, on the other hand, I may claim for it the merit that it has presented the topics referred to in a manner as little provocative or controversial as possible. I am bound to say, also, that in the observations which the noble Earl has made on the Speech he has done nothing to import any elements of controversy into this debate which are not provided in the Speech itself.

The noble Earl touched, in the first place, upon the question of the Venezuelan negotiations; and he did no more than I expected from him in offering to the Houses of Parliament and the Government his congratulations on the result of those negotiations, so far as they have yet proceeded. Your Lordships will have observed that the cautious and moderate tone of the Speech, which I think I can claim for almost every paragraph, is to be found in the paragraph relating to Venezuela. The noble Earl used some expressions which led me to think that he was under the impression that these negotiations were still more completely concluded than they are actually. I think he used the expression that the negotiations had resulted in the settlement of all matters in dispute.

*EARL SPENCER: I did not go quite so far as that. I said, with the exception of certain matters which were referred to the Court at The Hague.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: That would certainly have been a statement going beyond the facts of the case. There are matters which still have to be referred to arbitration; and it is impossible to say that, even with the assistance of a court of arbitration, questions of controversy may not yet arise between us and other Powers who have been concerned in these negotiations. All that the paragraph asserts—and that is, I think, quite sufficient ground for congratulation — is that the negotiations have proceeded to such a point as to enable us and the other Powers concerned to give orders to raise the blockade and bring all measures involving the use of force to an immediate conclusion. Therefore, that eliminates, although it may not be an absolute settlement, all those elements which formerly contained possibilities of danger. It cannot be denied that these proceedings have involved certain elements of risk and danger. It could not well be otherwise when several great Powers have found it necessary to make claims, not only of a pecuniary character, but also of a moral character, affecting the honour and interests, and even the lives and safety, of their subjects, upon a small State which, for reasons with which we are all familiar, does not possess at the present moment a Government of a very responsible character. And all these elements of danger were not removed by the fact that the proceedings of these States were known, were watched with intense interest—I will not say jealousy—were rightly watched with the closest attention by the Government of another great State, the United States, who were properly jealous of any interference on the part of European Powers with the affairs of any American State. That these negotiations should have been brought to the satisfactory point to which they have now been brought, without any serious consequences to the good relations of any of the Powers involved, says, I think, a great deal for the moderate temper of all parties concerned; and I think it says something also for the skill and prudence of those diplomatists who have conducted these negotiations.

The noble Earl complained that this correspondence has not been presented at an earlier period, and I think he said that the anxiety of the country would have been less if at an earlier period we had had a fuller knowledge of the communications which had passed between our Government and that of the United States. It will be found that the Papers which have been laid on the Table today contain much information, not only of what has taken place since Parliament was prorogued, but also a considerable amount of information as to the previous negotiations, which it was impossible to give at an earlier time. The noble Earl must remember that it is the invariable practice of all Governments before making public any despatches relating to such negotiations to consult the Governments concerned as to whether they have any objection to the publication of those Papers in the form proposed; and it was impossible before the prorogation of Parliament to obtain the consent of all the other Powers to the publication of the Papers which the noble Earl complains were not published at an earlier period. I think, considering the short time which the noble Earl has had to study these Papers, he has displayed a most remarkable acquaintance with some of their contents. But I can hardly imagine that even he himself is satisfied that he has so thoroughly mastered their sense that it may not be necessary for him to refer to them at some future period; and I think that any debate upon the manner in which this case has been conducted had much better be postponed until your Lordships have had the opportunity of fully digesting the contents of this Blue-book, and until my noble friend the Foreign Secretary is in a position to make a full statement upon the subject.

It is extremely easy to say, as some have said, that this matter was never worth the trouble and risk which have been incurred, that it would have been far better to leave the matter alone, and that we should have taken no steps to enforce the claims which we have so repeatedly made, the greater part of which are for extremely small amounts, but which have been utterly ignored and disregarded by the Venezuelan Government. I think that in a matter of this sort such a policy would have been extremely shortsighted, and that such conduct on our part would have proved in the end most unsatisfactory, not only to ourselves, but also to the Government of the United States. Accepting as we do fully and unreservedly the Monroe doctrine, to which the Government and the people of the United States attach so great importance, I cannot conceive that anything could have had a greater tendency to lessen the force and acceptance of the Monroe doctrine by the European Powers than any endeavour to import into that doctrine consequences and principles which have never been claimed for it by its authors. Rightly or not, wisely or unwisely, probably wisely and rightly, the Government of the United States has never accepted any responsibility for the acts of the Republics established in South America; and if, in deference to supposed, and I believe erroneously supposed, susceptibilities on the part of the Government of the United States, we, or other Powers of Europe, were to abstain from enforcing claims which we believe to be just and essential to the maintenance of our own honour, and the protection of our own subjects, such a course would make the Monroe doctrine an object of dislike and opposition to every civilised Power in the world. I believe this view is taken, or at all events will be taken, by the great majority of the people of the United States themselves. The people of the United States are very far from being children; they are men of a most practical character, fully aware of, and alive to, the consequences of their own acts; and I do not believe that there can be a better way of acquiring their confidence than that we should meet them in that spirit, and treat them as a people who are fully aware of the consequences of their own actions, who are prepared to assert their own rights, and not to be deterred from that assertion by any supposed fancies or susceptibilities which may be without the slightest particle of foundation.

Then, although it might be right for us to assert our own claims, we are told it was a mistake to assert them in conjunction with other Powers, especially with Germany, in the way we have done. I was very glad to hear the noble Earl dissociate himself entirely from the absurd and exaggerated language which has been used on the subject of the so-called alliance with Germany. It has been explained over and over again by various Members of His Majesty's Government that there has been in this matter nothing of the nature of an alliance. There has been co-operation for definite and mutual objects between ourselves and the German and Italian Governments, but nothing in the nature of an alliance. I should be very glad, if we have a further opportunity of discussing this matter, to have some further explanation of the views of those who think we ought to have acted independently. I should like very much to know what is their idea of the situation that would have been created if we and Germany and Italy, and perhaps other Powers, had all separately made our claims, separately taken measures to enforce them, entered upon separate naval demonstrations, and perhaps land demonstrations, entered into separate negotiations with the Venezuelan Government, and indicated separate sources of satisfaction for our claims. I cannot conceive a state of things more likely to conduce to friction and ill-will amongst all the Powers if they, acting for a common object, for some unexplained reason of policy, were bound to act for that common object in entire isolation from each other.

The noble Earl made a few observations, to which I think I have no exception to take, on the next paragraph of the King's Speech, relating to the position of the European provinces of Turkey. I think he suggested that other Governments had afforded more information upon this subject than had been given by us to Parliament. Papers on this subject will shortly be laid before Parliament, and it was thought better to delay them until they could be presented in a somewhat complete form. The proposals to be made to the Powers who were parties to the Treaty of Berlin by Austria-Hungary and Russia have as yet only been confidentially communicated to those Powers, and have not yet been communicated to the Government of Turkey. Of course, until we receive authority from the Powers concerned to do so, it will be impossible to include them in the Papers to be presented to the House. The noble Earl said that for the past two or three years the condition of these provinces has been one that has caused much anxiety. I think I can go further than the noble Earl and say that I do not think I remember a time in which the condition of some part of the dominions of Turkey has not caused anxiety. This state of things is no doubt the concern of all the parties to the Berlin Treaty, ourselves not least among them. But the special conditions which at present prevail in the vilayets, of which there are five, in the province of Macedonia, are an immediate danger and concern, more especially to the States named in the paragraph in the King's Speech—Austria-Hungary and Russia—and it has naturally fallen to them, who are more immediately and directly concerned than others, and who are also in a position to put a certain amount of pressure on the Government of Bulgaria, to submit to the Powers of Europe proposals which they think adequate to restore order and to establish confidence in that region. I can only join with the noble Earl opposite in trusting that the proposals may be found quite adequate for the purpose in view.

The noble Earl referred to the operations which are taking place in Somaliland. Your Lordships will observe that that, as well as the preceding paragraph of His Majesty's Speech, has reference to proceedings which affect the security of our fortresses, naval stations, and coaling places on the route to India. I think the difficulties that have arisen with the Turkish Government, or rather with certain tribes very imperfectly controlled by the Turkish Government, and also the difficulties referred to in Somaliland, are subjects about which very little is generally known in this country at present. We shall take early steps to place Parliament in full possession of all the information we have on these subjects; but I am afraid it will be quite impossible, without more copious reference to documents than would be permissible on this occasion, to give the noble Earl anything like a full account of the scope and character of the operations that are going on in Somaliland. I can only assure him that there is nothing in contemplation of the nature of an occupation of any vast tract of desert, or, in fact, of an occupation by us of any place not now occupied by us. Tribes under our protectorate and that of Italy have been attacked by the Mullah Abdullah in a manner and with results which it is impossible for us to tolerate; after much consideration, it has been decided between ourselves and Italy that the operations that are now being conducted afford the best prospect of breaking the power, influence, and authority of that Mahomedan potentate, and the best prospect for the necessary protection and security of those under our protection. Although these operations are very little known and under stood at present by the public generally, they are matters with respect to our Imperial interests of the very highest importance. The security of our naval bases on the route not only to our Indian possessions, but also to Australia, and to the China seas, is of the very highest importance to the Empire; and holding that opinion, as we do, it is impossible for us to permit the sources of supply to these garrisons, or to the very large populations which have grown up around them, to be threatened with danger in Asia or in Africa.

The noble Earl alluded, in terms to which, I am sure, we can take no exception, to the great work being done by Mr. Chamberlain in South Africa. I entirely agree with the noble Earl that the cases in which it may be necessary or desirable for a Minister of the Crown to undertake such a labour must be of an exceptional kind. But I think that your Lordships will admit that the present circumstances in South Africa are of an exceptional nature. We have just terminated a great, difficult, and arduous conflict. Great questions, some of them of a very difficult character, remain to be settled; and it has been thought—and Mr. Chamberlain himself was of the opinion —that the decisions to be taken by His Majesty's advisers on these great questions would be facilitated if he were able by personal inquiry and communication with the High Commissioner, Lord Milner, and with the representatives of many of the interests concerned, to offer advice on all those topics. I need not say that the idea of superseding, or of in the slightest degree diminishing, the authority of our trusted Commissioner, Lord Milner, never entered into the mind of His Majesty's Government. I believe there is no man who has more cordially welcomed the idea of Mr. Chamberlain's journey and personal investigation of these questions than Lord Milner himself.

There is an observation I think I must make which applies to the many questions asked by the noble Earl. He asked for further information on the subject of the expedition to Kano. I suppose I could give the House some information on that subject, but it would be necessarily of an extremely perfunctory character. Papers on the subject will be laid on the Table of the House almost immediately, and I think it would be far more convenient that this and other matters as to which the general knowledge is very imperfect should be discussed when the House is in a position to do so with fuller information. We are in this House in a rather different position from the other House. The time of the House of Commons is so completely occupied by the business that is laid before it that unless a matter of public importance finds an opportunity of being discussed in the Debate on the Address, it is quite possible that no other opportunity may occur for its discussion. That disability cannot be said to apply to this House, and it will be perfectly competent for noble Lords to discuss any of these matters when full and complete information has been laid before Parliament upon them.

The noble Earl has made some reference to the paragraph in the Speech which deals with the Bill relating to the tenure of agricultural land in Ireland. The noble Earl said we have often had measures purporting to be a final settlement of this question. I trust that this measure may, at all events, approach a final settlement, although those words are not to be found in the Speech from the Throne. I think it would be a sanguine view, however, to say that even this measure will prove to be a final settlement. A Bill was introduced last year in the other House of Parliament with this object, but time did not permit of its discussion. But it has been the subject of a great deal of attention and discussion in Ireland; and, with the fuller information which that discussion has placed in our hands, we hope we are in a better position in the present session than we were in the last to make substantial progress with a measure aiming at the complete settlement of this question.

The conference which has recently taken place in Ireland between representatives of the landlords and the tenants was referred to by the noble Earl. Like him, I shall entirely refrain from expressing any opinion whatever as to whether the resolutions arrived at by that conference do or do not afford a practical basis for a settlement of this question. It would be entirely premature for me to say anything on an extremely difficult and complicated question, on which the responsible members of the Government in the other House will take the earliest opportunity of making a full statement and placing full information before the House. It would not be premature, however, I think, on my part to say that the spirit, at all events, which has animated the discussions at that conference seems to have been of a most satisfactory character. I entirely dissent from the view of those who suggest that the only agreement between the representatives of the landlords and of the tenants was that as large as possible a sum should be extracted from the English Treasury. On the contrary, I think that conference was animated by a sincere and honest endeavour to find fair and equitable terms, on which all classes interested in land in Ireland might find the means of continuing to live and work in Ireland, and to do their best for the prosperity of the country. In these circumstances, it is not too sanguine a hope that we may be approaching the further consideration of this great question under conditions more favourable, more hopeful, than those which have existed on any previous occasion.

There was one other subject to which the noble Earl referred. That was the measure for extending the Education Act of last year, with the necessary modifications, to the metropolitan area. The noble Earl made, I think, a kind of protest against the hope expressed by the noble Duke who moved the Address that we might be spared, in the discussion of this measure, some of the controversies which occupied so much of our time last session. The noble Earl, as far as I understood him, expressed his intention of taking this opportunity of fighting all our old battles over again. I do not think that is either a necessary or an entirely reasonable attitude to assume. I fully admit that the noble Earl and his friends are perfectly free to do everything in their power either to attack, modify, or reverse the principles of the Act which was passed last session; but I do not think it would be unreasonable to ask them to postpone that attempt until the period comes when they will be in a position to give effect to the principles they so strongly hold. I can scarcely imagine that anybody is of opinion that, as regards the most controversial parts of the measure of last year, those which excited the greatest degree of controversy both in this House and the other House, London should be treated on different principles from those which have been applied to the rest of the country. Although its different conditions of local government make the separate treatment of London to a considerable degree necessary, it would not be reasonable to propose to treat London on a different basis and on different principles from those which we have applied to the rest of the country. Therefore, I cannot help expressing my own strong opinion that to fight the battle on these religious questions, of which we heard so much last year, over again on the question of the London Bill will be unnecessary waste of the time of Parliament. The noble Earl complained of the omission of one subject from His Majesty's Speech, which, he says, is exciting a great deal of attention in the country.

*EARL SPENCER: The Brussels Convention.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I am afraid I have very little or no information to give your Lordships on the subject of the Brussels Convention, except to point out to the noble Earl that a measure is promised which will give him the opportunity for which he has long been pining of a discussion upon the convention for the abolition of the sugar bounties. The noble Earl made some complaint last session that a Resolution was not moved in this House similar to that moved in the other House on the subject; but the Bill which will be founded on that Resolution will have to come before this House, and I cannot conceive that the noble Earl can require any better opportunity than will be afforded him by that measure of entering into a discussion upon it.

I need hardly say that the omission of the subject of Army reorganisation from the Speech indicates that it is not the intention of his Majesty's Government to propose anything in the nature of legislation on the subject of military reform in the present year. The views of the Government upon Army administration and Army reorganisation must be expressed, and will be expressed, at a very early period on the introduction of the Army Estimates in the other House of Parliament, and I entirely fail to see how the subject could have been introduced into His Majesty's Speech when there was no intention of legislating on the subject. I am afraid I have detained your Lordships at considerable length. I do not think it necessary to detain you longer.

In conclusion I would only say that, although the topics referred to in the Speech are not generally of an extremely exciting, or perhaps even of an interesting character, I think, taken as a whole, the subjects referred to in that Speech are subjects not unworthy of the attention of an Imperial Parliament, and of the Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland. The Speech contains references to many subjects of great importance to our Imperial interests in every quarter of the world—in Europe, in America, in Asia, and in Africa—and these references are well calculated to give to Parliament some idea of the extent, the magnitude, and the importance of the Imperial interests which have been created in every part of the world. And though the references to domestic legislation are not of an ambitious character, the two principal subjects with which it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to deal are subjects than which I do not think there are any that can be held to be of greater importance by the Parliament of Great Britain and of Ireland. The one is an attempt—I trust a successful attempt—to restore social contentment in Ireland, and the other is to complete a scheme of educational reform for the great metropolis of this country, than which I can conceive no subject with which the future interests and welfare of this Empire are more closely concerned.

On Question, agreed to, *nemine dissentiente*; Address ordered to be presented to His Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

THE LIGHT LOAD-LINE COMMITTEE.

Earl SPENCER: I should like to ask the noble Duke whether the Light Load-Line Committee, of which I had the honour of being a member, will be reconstituted.

The Duke of DEVONSHIRE: My noble friend Lord Wolverton, who has succeeded Lord Dudley as the representative of the Board of Trade in your Lordships' House, will be proposed as a member of the Committee. There is, I believe, another vacancy, and as to that I will take an early opportunity of conferring with the noble Earl and the President of the Board of Trade.

The Earl of Morley appointed, *nemine dissentiente*, to take the Chair in all Committees of this House for this session.

Committee for Privileges—Appointed.

Commitee for the Journals—Appointed.

Stoppages in the Streets—Order to prevent, renewed.

Appeal Committee—Appointed.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the following Papers, having been commanded to be presented to this House by His Majesty had been so presented on the following dates by delivery to the Clerk of the Parliaments, pursuant to Standing Order No. CXI., viz. :—

INDIA (HYDERABAD).

Agreement respecting the Hyderabad Assigned Districts. (December 19.)

FORESTRY.

Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture to inquire into and report on British Forestry; with minute appointing the Committee. (December 19.)

ANKYLOSTOMIASIS (OUTBREAK OF IN A CORNISH MINE.)

Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department by J. S. Haldane, Esq., M.D., F.R.S., on an outbreak of Ankylostomiasis in a Cornish mine. (December 19.)

CENSUS (ENGLAND AND WALES) 1901.

Area, houses, and population, also population classified by ages, condition as to marriage, occupations, birthplaces, and infirmities for the counties of—Oxford; Cambridge; Dorset (December 19); Buckingham; Bedford (January 14); Carmarthen; Denbigh; Carnarvon (January 17); Cardigan; Hereford (January 23); Salop; Westmoreland; Pembroke (January 29); Montgomery; Merioneth; Brecknock; Huntingdon; Flint (February 4); Anglesea; Rutland; Radnor. (February 10.)

COLONIES (ANNUAL).

No. 376. Grenada (Report for 1901), (December 20); No. 377. Northern Nigeria (Report for 1901) (January 5); No. 378. British Guiana (Report for 1901 – 1902) (January 7); No. 379. Mauritius (Report for 1901) (January 17); No. 380. Basutoland (Report for 1901–1902). (January 28.)

AFRICA.

I. No. 6 (1902). Correspondence respecting slavery and the slave trade in East Africa and the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba. (December 20.)

II. No. 1 (1903). Correspondence respecting the rising of the Mullah Muhammed Abdullah in Somaliland, and consequent military operations. (January 27.)

TRADE REPORTS.

I. Annual Series:

No. 2923. Germany (Trade of Wurtemberg for 1901 and part of 1902). (December 29.)

No. 2924. Spain (Trade of Bilbao for 1901). (January 2.)

No. 2925. Trade of Mexico for 1901. (January 10.)

No. 2926. Turkey (Trade of Jeddah and Hodeida). (January 16.)

No. 2927. Hayti.

No. 2928. Brazil (Rio de Janeiro). (January 17.)

No. 2929. Siam (Trade of the Chiengmai District.) (January 23.)

No. 2930. Finances of Italy for the year 1902.

No. 2931. Egypt (Trade of Alexandria for 1901, and 1st January to 31st May, 1902.)

No. 2932. (Trade of Crete for the year 1901.) (January 31.)

No. 2933. Foreign Trade of Italy for the year 1901. (February 6.)

No. 2934. Shipping and Trade of Denmark for 1901 (Supplementary). (February 10.)

No. 2935. Italy (Trade of Venice). (February 11.)

II. Miscellaneous Series:

No. 587. Coal Industry of the United States. (January 16.)

No. 588. Africa (exotic plants of economic interest in the Botanic Gardens at Entebbe, Uganda). (January 23.)

TREATY SERIES.

I. 1902—No 17. Final Protocol between the Foreign Powers and China for the resumption of friendly relations; signed at Peking, 7th September 1901 (with 19 annexes). (December 29.)

II. 1903—No. 1. Convention between the United Kingdom and Belgium regulating telephonic communication between the United Kingdom and Belgium; signed at Brussels, 21st November, 1902. (January 22.)

No. 2. Convention between the United Kingdom and France for the exchange of insured and uninsured parcels between France and the British Colony of Gibraltar; signed at Paris, 22nd October 1902. (Ratifications exchanged at Paris 10th December, 1902). (January 22.)

CROFTER COLONISATION.

Thirteenth Report of the Commissioners appointed to carry out a scheme of colonisation in the Dominion of Canada of crofters and cottars from the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland; with appendices. (December 31.)

GLANDERS.

Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture for the purpose of conducting experimental investigations with regard to the communicability of the infection of glanders under certain conditions, and as to the arresting and curative powers, if any, of mallein repeatedly administered. (January 2.)

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Tables showing the extent in statute acres and the produce of the crops for the year 1902. (January 5.)

MINES AND QUARRIES (EXPLOSIONS AT THE MACLAREN COLLIERY, ABERTYSSWG).

Reports to His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department by S. J. Evans, Esq., K.C., and J. S. Martin, Esq., one of His Majesty's Inspectors of Mines, on the circumstances attending an explosion which occurred at MacLaren Colliery (No. 1 Pit), Abertysswg, on the 3rd September, 1902. (January 8.)

COUNTY COURTS (PLAINTS AND SITTINGS).

Return for the year 1901. (January 14.)

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

I. Return for the month of November, 1902. (January 15.)

II. Return for the month of December, 1902. (February 12.)

DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR REPORTS (COAL).

Extracts from the Reports of His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad relating to particular trades and industries received during the year 1902: Coal. (January 16.)

MISCELLANEOUS No. 1 (1903) (NATIONALITY AND NATURALISATION).

Despatch from His Majesty's Minister in Brazil, enclosing a translation of a decree regulating naturalisation of aliens. (January 17.)

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (EVICTION NOTICES).

Return of the number of eviction notices filed during the quarter ended 31st December, 1902. (January 22.)

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES (IRELAND).

Return for the quarter ended 31st December, 1902. (January 26.)

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

Return of evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st December, 1902. (January 27.)

CERTIFICATES OF ORIGIN.

Memorandum showing the regulations existing in the principal European countries, and in Canada, the United States, and Japan, in regard to certificates of origin. (February 5.)

WORKHOUSE ACCOUNTS.

Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the President of the Local Government Board to inquire into workhouse accounts; with appendices. (February 5.)

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES, 1901) (PART I. CRIMINAL STATISTICS).

Statistics relating to criminal proceedings, police, coroners, prisons, reformatory and industrial schools, and criminal lunatics, for the year 1901. (February 6.)

POISONS.

I. Report—Supplementary Report and Minority Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Lord President of the Council to consider Schedule A. to the Pharmacy Act, 1868, to report the alterations therein which they deem expedient, and whether a third part should be added thereto; with the minutes appointing the Committee and list of witnesses examined. (February 6.)

II. Minutes of evidence taken before the Departmental Committee appointed by the Lord President of the Council to consider Schedule A. to the Pharmacy Act, 1868, to report the alterations therein which they deem expedient, and whether a third part should be added thereto; with appendices and index to evidence. (February 6.)

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Appendix, Section II., to the Annual Report of the Commissioners, for the year 1901. (February 7.)

INDIA (TRADE).

Tables relating to the trade of British India, 1897–98 to 1901–1902. (February 7.)

VENEZUELA, No. 1 (1903).

Correspondence respecting the affairs of Venezuela. (February 13.)

NORTHERN NIGERIA.

Correspondence relating to Kano. (February 14.)

UNITED STATES, No. 1 (1903).

Convention, signed at Washington, 24th January, 1903, for the adjustment of the boundary between the Dominion of Canada and the Territory of Alaska. (February 16.)

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

PETITIONS.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petition against; of the inhabitants of Basingstoke; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Southern Division of Scotland, for the year 1902.

GIBRALTAR.

Report on proposed eastern harbour and dock (with drawings).

COMMERCIAL, No. 1 (1903).

Correspondence with the Russian Government respecting the interpretation of the most-favoured-nation clause in connection with countervailing duties on bounty-fed sugar.

CREMATION.

Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to prepare a draft of the regulation to be made under the Cremation Act, 1902.

METEOROLOGICAL COUNCIL.

Report of the Meteorological Council for the year ended 31st March, 1902.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LUNACY.

1. Return to the Lord Chancellor of visits made and patients seen by the several Commissioners in Lunacy during the six months ending 31st December, 1902.

2. Return of all sums received by the visitors of lunatics for travelling expenses or upon any other account, from 1st January to 31st December, 1902.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1888.

Rule under the Act, dated 15th January, 1903.

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION ACT, 1899.

Minutes sanctioning the subjects to be taught under Clause 8 of the Act for the counties of—

Cardigan (2nd minute).
Devon (8th Minute).
Rutland (5th Minute).

GREENWICH HOSPITAL AND TRAVERS' FOUNDATION (CAPITAL AND INCOME ACCOUNTS 1901–1902).

Accounts of the receipt and expenditure of the capital and of the income derived from the lands and other property held for the benefit of Greenwich Hospital, and the foundation of Samuel Travers, Esquire, for the year ended 31st March, 1902; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE ACT, 1889.

Order in Council transferring to the Board of Agriculture all the powers and duties which were conferred on the Commissioners of His Majesty's Works and Public Buildings in respect of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, by or in pursuance of Section 22 of the Crown Lands Act, 1851, or the Parks Regulation Act, 1872.

INEBRIATES ACTS 1879 to 1899 (IRELAND).

Rules for retreats licensed under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1899, dated 3rd February, 1903, approved by the Lord Lieutenant.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE ACT (IRELAND) 1877.

Two Orders in Council, dated 17th November, 1902, giving effect to Rules of Court.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

I. Additional rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland varying the Rules and Programme of Examinations for 1903.

II. Time Table of Examinations for the year 1903.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT 1887.

Proclamation, dated 2nd February, 1903, revoking the several proclamations mentioned in the schedule thereto.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP.

I. (Sanitary Accommodation.) Order made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, dated 4th February 1903, in pursuance of Section 9 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, determining what is sufficient and suitable accommodation in the way of sanitary conveniences, within the meaning of that section.

II. (Particulars of Piece Work Wages, Wholesale Tailoring.) Order made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, dated 5th January, 1903, applying, with modifications, the provisions of Section 116 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, to factories and workshops in which wholesale tailoring is carried on, and to outworkers employed in wholesale tailoring, and the occupiers and contractors by whom they are employed.

CHELSEA HOSPITAL (ARMY PRIZE MONEY AND LEGACY FUNDS, 1901–1902).

Account of the receipts and expenditure of the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital (for services other than those voted by Parliament) in the year ended 31st March, 1902; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

IMPERIAL OTTOMAN GUARANTEED LOAN.

Account for the year 1902.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES AND SHOP CLUBS.

Regulation, dated 1st January, 1903, made by the Treasury under the Friendly Societies Act, 1896, with reference to friendly societies desirous of being certified under the Shop Clubs Act, 1902.

DUCHY OF LANCASTER.

Account of the receipts and disbursements of the Duchy of Lancaster in the year ended 20th December, 1902, also a separate account of the capital of the said Duchy to same date.

SUPERANNUATION.

I. Treasury Minute, dated 15th January, 1903, declaring that John Glodhill, Post Office, sub-office postman, was appointed without a civil service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department.

II. Treasury Minutes, dated 17th December, 1902, granting a retired allowance to Henry Bonn, assistant superintendent, 2nd class, Newcastle-on-Tyne Post Office; dated 22nd January, 1903, granting a retired allowance to Thomas Riley, principal foreman in charge of the metal foundries, rolling mills and quick-firing case factory, Royal Laboratory, Woolwich.

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE MARKS ACTS, 1883–1902.

Patents Rules, 1903.

MILITARY MANŒUVRES, 1903.

Order in Council relative to military manœuvres, 1903.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT.

I. The annual report on the state of the finances of the University of Edinburgh, under the provisions of Section 30 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889.

II. Annual statistical report to the Secretary for Scotland, under the provisions of Section 30 of the Universities (Scotland) Act for the year 1901–1902, by the University Courts of the University of Glasgow; the University of Edinburgh; the University of Aberdeen.

LOCAL TAXATION RETURNS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1881.

Annual Local Taxation (Scotland) Returns for the year 1900–1901.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 17*th February*, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

Message to attend His Majesty.

The House went, and being returned—

WRITS ISSUED DURING RECESS.

Mr. SPEAKER informed the House, That he had issued Warrants for New Writs during the Recess, for Liverpool (West Derby Division), in the room of Samuel Wasse Higginbottom, esquire, deceased; County of Antrim (South Division), The Right Hon. William Grey Ellison Macartney Deputy Master of the Mint.

SENTENCE ON A MEMBER.

Mr. SPEAKER informed the House that he had received the following letter relating to a sentence upon a Member.

Royal Courts of Justice,
London,
23rd January, 1903.

The Right Honourable
The Speaker of the House of Commons.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Arthur Alfred Lynch, Member for Galway, was at a Trial-at-Bar, before Mr. Justice Wills, Mr. Justice Channell, and myself, to-day convicted of high treason and sentenced to death.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ALVERSTONE.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to give notice that when motion is made for the issue of a New Writ for the borough of Galway, I shall move that it be issued that day six months.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the County of Perth (Eastern Division), in the room of Sir John George Smyth Kinloch, Baronet (Manor of Northstead).—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Charles Day Rose, esquire, for County of Cambridge (Eastern or Newmarket Division).

William Watson Rutherford, esquire, Liverpool (West Derby Division).

ELECTIONS.

Ordered, That all Members who are returned for two or more places in any part of the United Kingdom do make their election for which of the places they will serve, within one week after it shall appear that there is no question upon the return for that place; and if anything shall come in question touching the return or election of any Member, he is to withdraw during the time the matter is in debate; and that all Members returned upon double returns do withdraw till their returns are determined.

Resolved, That no Peer of the Realm, except such Peers of Ireland as shall for the time being be actually elected, and shall not have declined to serve, for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, hath any right to give his Vote in the election of any Member to serve in Parliament.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of the United Kingdom for any Lord of Parliament, or other Peer or Prelate, not being a Peer of Ireland at the time elected, and not having declined to serve for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, to concern himself in the election of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament, except only any Peer of Ireland, at such elections in Great Britain respectively where such Peer shall appear as a candidate, or by himself, or any others, be proposed to be elected; or for any Lord Lieutenant or Governor of any county to avail himself of any authority derived from his Commission, to influence the election of any Member to serve for the Commons in Parliament."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

*MR. **JAMES LOWTHER** (Kent, Thanet) moved to omit all words after the word "Kingdom" in line 2, down to "for" in line 8, the effect of which, he explained, was to restrict the application of the Sessional Order to Lords Lieutenant, as distinct from Peers.

MR. **GALLOWAY** (Manchester, S.W.) seconded.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'Kingdom,' in line 2, to the word 'for' in line 8."—(*Mr. James Lowther.*)

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided :—Ayes, 270 ; Noes, 68. (Division List No. 1.)

AYES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Abraham, William (*Rhondda*)
Aird, Sir John
Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*)
Allsopp, Hon George
Ambrose, Robert
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Beckett, Ernest William
Bell, Richard
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Bull, William James
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, Rt Hn J A (*Glasg.*)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Channing, Francis Allston
Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crombie, John William
Cross, H. Shepherd (*Bolton*)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Davies, M. Vaughan- (*Cardign*
Delany, William
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Edwards, Frank
Emmott, Alfred
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gore, Hon. G. R. C. Ormsby-
(*Salop*).
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Gray, Ernest (*West Ham*)
Greene, Sir E. W. (*Bury St. Ed.*
Grenfell, William Henry
Griffith, Ellis J.
Groves, James Grimble
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robt. Wm.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope John Deans (*Fife, West*
Horniman, Frederick John
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fr
Johnstone, Heywood
Jones, David B. (*Swansea*)
Joyce, Michael
Kemp, George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (*Salop*
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lambert, George
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (*Monm'th*
Lawson, John Grant
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lockie, John
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lough, Thomas
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lundon, W.
Macdona, John Cumming
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Govern, T.
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, William
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Morgan, David J. (*Walth'mstow*
Morrison, James Archibald
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn. A Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Col. Wyndham (*Bath*)
Myers, William Henry
Newnes, Sir George
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, South*)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Brien, William (*Cork*)
O'Connor, James (*Wicklow, W.*)
O'Kelly, James (*Roscommon, N*
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Charles M (*Durham*
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pretyman, Ernest George

Price, Robert John
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Ratcliff, R. F.
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (*Waterford*
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, S. Forde (*Bethnal Green*
Rigg, Richard
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rose, Charles Day
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (*Liverpool*
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, H C (*North'mb. Tyneside*
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (*Northants*
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (*Ormskirk*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glamorgan, E.*
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thomas, F. Freeman- (*Hastings*
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomkinson, James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Wallace, Robert
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (*Merioneth*)
Williams, Colonel R. (*Dorset*)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, Fred. W. (*Norfolk, Mid*
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson, J. W. (*Worcestersh. N.*
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (*Yorks.*)
Wodehouse, Rt Hn. E. R. (*Bath*)
Woodhouse, Sir J T (*Huddersf'd*
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. (Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baldwin, Alfred
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bignold, Arthur
Boulnois, Edmund
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Ellis, John Edward
Gordon, Maj Evans- (*Tr. Hmlts*
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hardie, J. Keir (*Merthyr Tyd*
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (*Bristl. E*
Hope, J. F. (*Sheff., B'tside*)
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Maconochie, A. W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (*Sligo, North*)
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*)
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (*Cork*)
O'Brien, Kendal (*Tipperary Mid*
O'Connor, T. P. (*Liverpool*)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (*Mayo, N.*)
Pease, Herbert Pike (*Darlingt'n*
Pickard, Benjamin
Power, Patrick Joseph
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (*Stalybridge*
Roche, John
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Shaw, Charles Edw. (*Stafford*)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*)
Stock, James Henry
Tollemache, Henry James
Tully, Jasper
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E H (*Sheffield*
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Welby, Lt.-Col A. C. E. (*Taunt'n*
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (*Notts*)
White, George (*Norfolk*)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. James Lowther and Mr. Galloway.

Main Question put and agreed to.

Resolved, That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of the United Kingdom for any Lord of Parliament or other Peer or Prelate, not being a Peer of Ireland at the time elected, and not having declined to serve for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, to concern himself in the election of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament, except only any Peer of Ireland, at such Elections in Great Britain respectively where such Peer shall appear as a candidate, or by himself, or any others, be proposed to be elected; or for any Lord Lieutenant or Governor of any county to avail himself of any authority derived from his Commission, to influence the election of any Member to serve for the Commons in Parliament.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath been elected or returned a Member of this House, or endeavoured so to be by bribery, or any other corrupt practices, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against all such persons as shall have been wilfully concerned in such bribery or other corrupt practices.

WITNESSES.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath been tampering with any witness, in respect of his evidence to be given to this House, or any Committee thereof, or directly or indirectly hath endeavoured to deter or hinder any person from appearing or giving evidence, the same is declared to be a high crime or misdemeanour; and this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath given false evidence in any case before this House, or any Committee thereof, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender.

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Ordered, That the Commissioners of the Police of the Metropolis do take care that, during the Session of Parliament, the passages through the streets leading to this House be kept free and open, and that no obstruction be permitted to hinder the passage of Members to and from this House, and that no disorder be allowed in Westminster Hall, or in the passages leading to this House, during the Sitting of Parliament, and that there be no annoyance therein or thereabouts; and that the Serjeant at Arms attending this House do communicate this Order to the Commissioners aforesaid.

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS.

Ordered, That the Votes and Proceedings of this House be printed, being first perused by Mr. Speaker; and that he do appoint the printing thereof; and that no person but such as he shall appoint do presume to print the same.

PRIVILEGES.

Ordered, That a Committee of Privileges be appointed.

OUTLAWRIES BILL.

"For the more effectual preventing Clandestine Outlawries," read the first time; to be read a second time.

JOURNAL.

Ordered, That the Journal of this House, from the end of the last session to the end of the present session, with an Index thereto, be printed.

Ordered, That 500 Copies of the said Journal and Index be printed by the appointment and under the direction of Sir Courtenay Peregrine Ilbert, K.C.S.I. C.I.E., the Clerk of this House.

Ordered, That the said Journal and Index be printed by such person as shall be licensed by Mr. Speaker, and that no other person do presume to print the same.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).

The following Papers, presented by Royal Command during the Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of the 14th August, 1896:—

1. Mines (Explosion at the MacLaren Colliery, Abertysswg).—Copy of Reports to the Secretary of State for the Home Department by S. T. Evans, Esquire, K.C., M.P., and J. S. Martin, Esquire, one of His Majesty's Inspectors of Mines, on the circumstances attending an explosion which occurred at MacLaren Colliery (No. 1 Pit), Abertysswg, on the 3rd September, 1902.

2. Judicial Statistics (England and Wales). — Copy of Judicial Statistics, Part I., relating to Criminal Proceedings, Police, Coroners, Prisons, Reformatory and Industrial Schools, and Criminal Lunatics, for England and Wales for 1901.

3. County Courts (Plaints and Sittings). Copy of Return of Plaints and Sittings in County Courts for the year 1901.

4. Census of England and Wales, 1901. —Copy of Census of England and Wales, 1901 (Counties of Bedford, Buckingham, Carnarvon, Denbigh, Anglesey, Radnor, Rutland, Montgomery, Merioneth, Brecknock, Huntingdon, Flint, Salop, Pembroke, Westmoreland, Hereford, and Cardigan;

5. Workhouse Accounts (Departmental Committee).—Copy of Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the President of the Local Government

Board to inquire into Workhouse Accounts, with Appendices;

6. Irish Land Commission (Proceedings).—Copy of Return of Proceedings during the months of November and December, 1902;

7. Agrarian Outrages (Ireland).—Copy of Return for the quarter ended 31st December, 1902;

8. Evictions (Ireland).—Copy of Return of Evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st December, 1902;

9. Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Eviction Notices).—Copy of Return of Eviction Notices filed during the quarter ended 31st December, 1902;

10. Agricultural Statistics (Ireland).—Copy of Tables showing the extent in statute acres and the produce of the Crops for the year 1902, &c.;

11. National Education (Ireland).—Copy of Appendix to the Sixty-eighth Report of the Commissioners, being for the year 1901. Section II.;

12. East India (Trade). — Copy of Tables relating to the Trade of British India with British Possessions and Foreign Countries for the five years 1897–8 to 1901–2;

13. Trade Reports (Extracts).—Copy of Extracts from the Reports of His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad, received during the year 1902, relating to particular Trades and Industries (Coal);

14 Railway Accidents.—Copy of Returns of Accidents and Casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several Railway Companies in the United Kingdom during the nine months ending 30th September, 1902, together with Reports of the Inspecting Officers, Assistant Inspecting Officers, and Sub-Inspectors of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain Accidents which were inquired into;

15. Certificates of Origin.—Copy of Memorandum showing the Regulations existing in the principal European Countries and in Canada, the United States, and Japan, in regard to Certificates of Origin;

16. Poisons (Departmental Committee).—Copy of Report, Supplementary Report, and Minority Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Lord President of the Council to consider Schedule A to The Pharmacy Act, 1868, to report the alterations therein which they deem expedient, and whether a third part should be added thereto, with Copy of the Minutes appointing the Committee, and a List of Witnesses examined. Part I.;

17. Poisons (Departmental Committee).—Copy of Minutes of Evidence taken by the Departmental Committee appointed by the Lord President of The Council to consider Schedule A to the Pharmacy Act, 1868, to report the alterations therein which they deem expedient, and whether a third part should be added thereto, together with Appendices and Index to Evidence. Part II.;

18. Glanders (Departmental Committee).—Copy of Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture for the purpose of conducting experimental investigations with regard to the communicability of the infection of Glanders under certain conditions, and as to the arresting and curative powers, if any, of mallein repeatedly administered.

19. Crofter and Cottar Colonisation Scheme.—Copy of Thirteenth Report of the Commissioners appointed to carry out a Scheme of Colonisation in the Dominion of Canada of Crofters and Cottars from the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland, with Appendices.

20. Northern Nigeria. — Copy of Correspondence relating to Kano.

21. Colonial Reports (Annual).—Copies of Reports Nos. 376 (Grenada, Annual Report for 1901), 377 (Northern Nigeria, Annual Report for 1901), 378 (British Guiana, Report for 1901–2), 379 (Mauritius, Annual Report for 1901), 380 (Basutoland Report for 1901-2).

22. Africa (No. 6, 1902).—Copy of Correspondence respecting Slavery and the Slave Trade in East Africa and the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba (in continuation of Africa, No. 4, 1901);

23. Treaty Series (No. 17, 1902).—Copy of Final Protocol between the Foreign Powers and China for the resumption of Friendly Relations. Signed at Peking, 7th September 1901 (with 19 Annexes);

24. Treaty Series (No. 1, 1903).—Copy of Convention between the United Kingdom and Belgium regulating Telephonic Communications between the United Kingdom and Belgium. Signed at Brussels, 21st November, 1902;

25. Treaty Series (No. 2, 1903).—Copy of Convention between the United Kingdom and France for the Exchange of Insured and Uninsured Parcels between France and the British Colony of Gibraltar. Signed at Paris, 22nd October, 1902. Ratifications exchanged at Paris, 10th December, 1902.

26. United States (No. 1, 1903).—Copy of Convention signed at Washington, 24th January, 1903, for the Adjustment of the Boundary between the Dominion of Canada and the Territory of Alaska;

27. Africa (No. 1, 1903).—Copy of Correspondence respecting the Rising of the Mullah Muhammed Abdullah in Somaliland and consequent Military Operations, 1901–2 (in continuation of Africa, No. 3, 1902);

28. Nationality and Naturalisation (Miscellaneous, No. 1, 1903).—Copy of Despatch from His Majesty's Minister in Brazil, enclosing a translation of a Decree regulating Naturalisation of Aliens (in continuation of Miscellaneous, No. 3, 1893);

29. Venezuela (No. 1, 1903).—Copy of Correspondence respecting the affairs of Venezuela;

30. Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2923 to 2935;

31. Trade Reports (Miscellaneous Series).—Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, Nos. 587 and 588;

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SUGAR BOUNTIES (COUNTERVAILING DUTIES) (COMMERCIAL, No. 1, 1903.)

Copy presented, of Correspondence with the Russian Government respecting the Interpretation of the Most-Favoured-Nation Clause in connection with Countervailing Duties on Bounty-fed Sugar [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CREMATION (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE).

Copy presented, of Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to prepare a Draft of the Regulations to be made under The Cremation Act, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (PARTICULARS OF PIECE WORK WAGES) (WHOLESALE TAILORING).

Copy presented, of Order, dated 5th January, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, applying with modifications the provisions of Section 116 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, to Factories and Workshops in which Wholesale Tailoring is carried on, and to Outworkers employed in Wholesale Tailoring, and the Occupiers and Contractors by whom they are employed [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (SANITARY ACCOMMODATION).

Copy presented, of Order made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, dated 4th February, 1903, in pursuance of Section 9 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, determining what is sufficient and suitable accommodation in the way of sanitary conveniences within the meaning of that section [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CASUALTIES TO STEAM BOILERS (MERCANTILE MARINE).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 26th November 1902; *Lord Charles Beresford*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 1.]

CASUALTIES TO STEAM BOILERS (UNITED KINGDOM).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 26th November 1902; *Lord Charles Beresford*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 2.]

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE MARKS ACTS.

Copy presented, of Patents Rules, 1903, under the Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks Acts, 1883 to 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE ACT, 1889.

Copy presented, of Draft Order in Council transferring to the Board of Agriculture all the powers and duties which were conferred on the Commissioners of His Majesty's Works and Public Buildings in respect of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, by or in pursuance of Section 22 of The Crown Lands Act, 1851, or The Parks Regulation Act, 1872 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INEBRIATES ACTS, 1879 TO 1899 (RULES FOR RETREATS) (IRELAND).

Copy presented of Rules for Retreats in Ireland licensed under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1899, dated 3rd February, 1903, approved by the Lord Lieutenant [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE ACT (IRELAND), 1877.

Copies presented, of two Orders in Council, dated 17th November, 1902, giving effect to Rules of Court under The Supreme Court of Judicature Act (Ireland), 1877 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (PROCLAMATION).

Copy presented, of a Proclamation, dated 2nd February, 1903, revoking the several Proclamations mentioned in the Schedule thereto [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Time Table of Examinations for 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Additional Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland varying the Rules and Programme of Examinations for 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY PENSIONS.

Copy presented, of Return showing the names of all Constabulary Officers now in receipt of Pensions, of all Head Constables, Sergeants, and Constables, and of all Widows and Children to whom Pensions have been granted since the Constabulary Estimate for 1902–3 was prepared, with the amount and date of Pension in each case [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

METEOROLOGY.

Copy presented, of Report of the Meteorological Council to the Royal Society for the year ending 31st March, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CHELSEA HOSPITAL.

Account presented, for the year ended 31st March, 1902, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 3.]

TREASURY CHEST.

Account presented, for the year 1901-2, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 4.]

CONSOLIDATED FUND.

Abstract Account presented, showing the issues made from the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom in the financial year ended 31st March, 1902, for the Interest and Management of the Debt, for the Civil List, and for all other Issues in the financial year for services charged directly on the said Fund; with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 5.]

MILITARY WORKS ACTS, 1897, 1899, AND 1901.

Account presented, for the period ended 31st March, 1902, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 6.]

IMPERIAL OTTOMAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1855.

Copy presented, of Account for the year 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (ORDNANCE FACTORIES) (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT).

Appropriation Account, presented, of the sums granted by Parliament for the expense of the Ordnance Factories, the cost of the productions of which have been charged to the Army, Navy, and Indian and Colonial Governments, etc., and the Statement of the Surpluses and Deficits upon the Grants for the year ended 31st March, 1902, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 7.]

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES AND SHOP CLUBS.

Copy presented, of Regulation, dated 1st January, 1903, made by the Treasury under The Friendly Societies Act, 1896, with reference to Friendly Societies desirous of being certified under The Shop Clubs Act, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

DUCHY OF LANCASTER.

Accounts presented, for the year ended 20th December, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 8.]

BARRACKS ACT, 1890.

Account presented, showing the money raised and issued under the provisions of the Act, the securities created in respect thereof, and the amount expended for the purposes of the Act to the 31st March, 1902, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 9.]

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 15th January, 1903, declaring that John Gledhill, Post Office Sub-Office Postman, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 17th December, 1902, granting a retired allowance to Mr. Henry Brown, Assistant Superintendent Second Class, Newcastle-on-Tyne Post Office, under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 22nd January, 1903, granting a retired allowance to Mr. Thomas Riley, Principal Foreman in Charge of the Metal Foundries, Rolling Mills, and Quick-firing Case Factory, Royal Laboratory, Woolwich, under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORTS).

Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Southern Division of Scotland for the year 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL TAXATION (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Annual Local Taxation Returns for Scotland for the year 1900–1901 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 10.]

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN.

Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Aberdeen for 1901–2 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 11.]

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

Copy presented, of Report on the state of the Finances of the University, made by the University Court, for the year to 31st August, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 12.]

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Edinburgh for the year 1901–2 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 13.]

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Glasgow for 1901–2 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 14.]

GIBRALTAR.

Copy presented, of Report on the proposed Eastern Harbour and Dock at Gibraltar (with drawings) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL AND TRAVERS' FOUNDATION.

Accounts presented, for the year ended 31st March, 1902, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 15.]

MILITARY MANŒUVRES, 1903.

Copy presented, of Draft Order in Council relative to Military Manœuvres, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Lunacy. Copy of Return to the Lord Chancellor of the number of Visits made and the number of Patients seen by the several Commissioners in Lunacy during the six months ending on the 31st December, 1902 [by Act].

2. Lunacy,—Copy of Return of all sums received by the Visitors of Lunatics for travelling expenses, or upon any other account, from 1st January to 31st December, 1902 [by Act].

3. Local Government Act, 1888 (Rule).—Copy of Rule under Section 89 (3) of the Local Government Act, 1888 [by Act].

ADDRESS IN REPLY TO HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

Mr. GRETTON (Derbyshire, S.) (who was heard with much difficulty) said: In rising to perform the onerous task which has been allotted to me to-day, I will ask the House to extend to me the courtesy and toleration it always gives to one who addresses it for the first time on an occasion so important as the present. I pause merely for a moment in order to refer to the great sorrow which I know is felt on all sides at the loss which the House has sustained by the terribly sudden death of Colonel M'Calmont, who last year so ably moved the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

The House, I believe, will learn with satisfaction and rejoicing that the blockade of the coast of Venezuela has terminated in the accomplishment of the objects with which the Government had undertaken it without the loss of a single life, or the destruction of any personal property during the operation. During the whole of these transactions I think I am right in saying that the most cordial relations have been maintained between His Majesty's Ministers and the Government of the United States. It is a cardinal point in our policy that the friendly relations now happily long existing between the people of this country and the United States should be minatained, and this policy is founded on the broad basis of national detriment. tion and mutually sincere sentiment. The principle of the Monroe Doctrine has always received the unwavering support of successive Ministries in this country, and no temporary inconvenience will cause us to waver in our adhesion to the policy established by the American people.

This time last year the war in South Africa was yet unterminated, and the Boer commandos were still maintaining their heroic but useless struggle in the field. I think the House will rejoice with me that at last the efforts of Lord Kitchener and Lord Milner secured the acceptance of terms which were honourable to both parties. Now that the war has ended, however, our task is by no means ended, for out of the discordant elements and dying embers of strife we have to set ourselves to the task of raising up a united and loyal people. Great progress has already been made with the settlement after the war. The Boer leaders have been, almost without exception, loyal to their undertakings, and we are determined that, in the performance of our share of the bargain, we shall not fall behind. I am convinced that this House will support His Majesty's Ministers in carrying out those large financial operations in South Africa which are necessary to the establishment of peaceful industry in that country. Roads, railways, personal security, irrigation, and the impartial administration of justice in the Courts of law, will do much to convince the Boers that under the British flag there are benefits worth having and cherishing. It is to be hoped that the progress of the settlement may be so rapid that popular representative institutions will be established at no remote date. The House and the country are rejoiced to see the effect of the tour through South Africa undertaken by the Colonial Secretary.

His brilliant success in South Africa has done much to hasten the settlement we all desire. He has met with the representatives of the various schools of opinion in South Africa, has discussed with them their differences, shown sympathy with their troubles, and at the same time explained in clear and firm terms the intentions of the Government. The progress that has been thus made will be welcomed by the people of this country, and the success of the right hon. Gentleman has justified his departure from all previous precedents. He has shown that we intend to show consideration and to act justly to our late opponents. The history of the past, I fear, shows examples where we have not taken such a course; the history of our dealings in South Africa has been a history of changing policy. We have not in the past adhered to any particular line, but on this occasion we are determined not to abandon our principles.

Turning to another question dealt with in His Majesty's most gracious speech, the House will learn, I think with satisfaction, that the Government are taking action to forward reforms with regard to the Turkish possessions in Europe,and particularly Macedonia. We remember what took place in Macedonia last year, and the calamities under which these people have suffered has reached such a stage as to become a question for the Governments of Europe. Russia and Austria are the two nations most interested in settling this question, but I think the other nations of Europe will support their action on humanitarian grounds if on no other.

The great ceremony which has just passed in India, the recent Durbar, has offered another demonstration of the proof of the loyalty of the feudatory princes and the people of India to the Crown and Empire, and we heartily welcome the stupendous burst of loyalty which greeted His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught. Turning to another question, legislation is necessary to carry into effect the agreement come to at the Brussels Conference with regard to the abolition of the sugar bounties. The bounty system has ruined the cane sugar industry in the West Indies and also all those industries which were connected with it, and it has checked the development of the cane sugar industry in other parts of our Empire.

With regard to another question near home: the problem of the Local Government of London has always demanded and received special attention. The normal condition of the vast area and the enormous population of the metropolis render special legislation necessary to deal with it, and, therefore, a special measure is necessary to complete the great scheme of national education, and to carry out with regard to London the great principle discussed in the Education Act which was passed last session. A measure dealing with the licensing laws of Scotland is included in the most gracious Speech from the Throne, and we shall all be agreed that some, at any rate, of the principles of the Act which we passed into law last year for England may be adopted in the Scotch Licensing Bill with advantage. The important subjects of the improvement of the law of valuation and assessments; the regulation of the employment of children; and the questions of the sale of adulterated dairy produce will receive the attention of the House, and we shall all welcome gladly the measures it is proposed to introduce with regard to them. I cannot sit down without thanking the House for the kind and patient attention it has given me.

CAPTAIN GREVILLE (Bradford, East): Mr. Speaker, in rising to second the Address, so ably moved by my hon. friend the Member for South Derbyshire, I am profoundly conscious of my own inability to do justice to the task which lies before me without a large measure of that generous toleration that the House always accords to those in my position. I am also greatly encouraged in my attempt by the thought that the honour done me is really a compliment to the constituency that I am so proud to represent, the working class constituency of a great manufacturing city, distinguished alike for its municipal energy and intellectual activity.

The exceedingly welcome news contained in the paragraph relating to the recent complications in Venezuela will be received with the utmost satisfaction by every shade of opinion in the country. Recent events have shown how patient and considerate the action of His Majesty's Government has been throughout the delicate and difficult negotiations that have taken place between this country and Venezuela. And it is a source of satisfaction to know that in all the steps incidental to the exercise of the measures which were employed, His Majesty's Government were most careful to advise and consult with the Government of the United States, and that in the conduct of the blockade throughout, no action was taken by this country in excess of what the circumstances of the case required, or considerations of humanity demanded. If the United States could see their way to the adoption of some effective course by which these almost periodical difficulties arising between the great Powers and some of the States of South America could be prevented, I think I may say it would meet with cordial concurrence in this country.

The House will hear with pleasure the announcement of an Arbitral tribunal for the settlement of the long standing and troublesome dispute over the exact boundary that divides the United States territory of Alaska from His Majesty's Dominion of Canada, which we all trust may have a successful issue. The whole point turns upon the interpretation of the loosely expressed geographical terms used in the Treaty of 1825 between the British and Russian Governments, to the latter of which Alaska then belonged. For a long time this uncertainty caused no inconvenience, as the precise meaning was never put to the test owing to the distance of the country from the general current of business life, and it is only since the influx of miners to the Yukon gold fields in the beginning of 1898 that the question has become acute. It is not necessary to trace where the chief obstacles to a settlement have occurred, but it will probably be agreed that any English Government would do all within its power to come to an amicable settlement of this long standing controversy, consistent with the material interests of Canada, and the Government deserves our congratulations at having arrived at such an arrangement with the Government of the United States.

With regard to Aden and the difficulties which have arisen in relation to the Hinterland of that important port, and in dealing with the tribes in the neighbourhood, it is much to be regretted that the efforts made by His Majesty's Government to arrive at an agreement with the Turkish Government for a joint delimitation should not, so far, have been successful. I hope, however, that the rumour which obtains that the Porte has at last given orders for the evacuation of the disputed territory is correct, as such action on the part of the Porte would greatly facilitate a settlement, which in the interest of all concerned, and of the peaceful development of that portion of the country, is earnestly to be hoped for. In the meantime it is satisfactory to note negotiations are being urgently pressed forward, so that all danger of collision and friction may be permanently removed.

With reference to the larger expedition to Somaliland, which has been rendered necessary by the conduct of the Mullah Abdullah, it is gratifying to note that a small body of mounted infantry recruited from the Boers of the Transvaal and Orange Colonies is forming part, and I trust it is significant of a time not far distant when the two races, having learned to respect each other in the field, may forget entirely their differences in the past, and co-operate in advancing the interests of the Empire to which they both belong. The House will note with cordial appreciation the friendly co-operation of the Italian Government in forwarding the great object of the expedition.

The same call for watchfulness and vigilance in the interests of the Empire occurs also in northern Nigeria, where the work in connection with the delimitation of the boundary between the British possessions and those of France has been seriously interfered with by the hostile action of the Emir of Kano, and we are all, I am sure, glad to hear of the complete success of the expedition which that action had rendered necessary, and which has been conducted in the most brilliant manner by its gallant commander, Colonel Morland. The result has been the fall of Kano and the flight of the Emir, at happily small loss to our forces.

To turn to matters nearer home, amongst measures promised is one relating to the tenure of agricultural land in Ireland. It will be the earnest desire of every one in this House that the Government should, if possible, find a solution of this difficult and distressing problem, which has for so long baffled the statesmen of all parties, and which has thrown back the development of the country, and handicapped it in the race for prosperity.

If it becomes a question of compromise, let there be compromise, and if of "give and take," may there be "give and take" on both sides; I trust I may venture to impress this upon those responsible for the conduct of affairs in Ireland; may we all see the end of dissension, and a larger portion of prosperity and happiness to the fair land of Ireland.

In the paragraph dealing with the Port of London, the words are used of "National Concern," and when the Report of the Commission, on the recommendations of which, possibly, the Bill will be framed, is studied, it is at once apparent that the matter, though of vital consequence to the trade of London, yet is so stupendous in character, so far reaching in its effects, concerns so many interests and so many public bodies, and otherwise deals with so many financial questions, that no other words could fitly describe it. It is undeniable that the Port of London is possibly in danger of ceasing to be the chief distributor to the coasts of England, and even partially of the supplies of London itself. The reasons for this are not difficult to find. The existing authorities are many and various, and consequently over-lapping. In many cases they are not bodies endowed with sufficient elasticity or powers to grapple with the difficulties which have arisen, and to initiate the necessary reforms and alterations necessitated by the larger tonnage of ships and the altered conditions of maritime commerce, such, for instance as the large outlay involved in deepening the river channel and increasing the dock accommodation, which the existing authorities are not in a position to meet. These reforms are of so urgent a character if the Port of London is to maintain its place amongst other competitors, both English and foreign, that the Commission have no hesitation in strongly recommending the formation of a single public authority for the Port of London. It would scarcely be fitting at this juncture to touch, even lightly, upon the mass of detail, financial and otherwise, that a measure of this magnitude will of necessity involve, but perhaps enough has been said to show the urgent necessity of legislation in connection with this subject, in the interests not only of London but of the country at large.

Amongst the minor, but nevertheless urgent measures mentioned in the latter part of His Majesty's gracious Speech is the reconstitution of the Royal Patriotic Fund Commission. The necessity of such a reconstitution is admitted generally, and, thanks to the attitude taken up by H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge and his colleagues in not allowing their Charter to stand in the way of reform, His Majesty's Government should have no difficulty in placing the fund upon a popular and effective basis that will allow of the good work now being done for the widows and orphans of our soldiers and sailors being carried out in a manner more in accordance with the views of the public.

In conclusion, I have only to thank hon. Members for the courteous and indulgent manner in which they have listened to one who today has had the honour of addressing them for the first time.

Question put.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament." — *Mr. Gretton.*)

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): It would hardly be becoming, and certainly not in accord with the prevailing sentiment of this assembly, if in commencing the debate on this Address I failed to give some expression to the satisfaction and joy with which we have observed that His Majesty in addressing his Parliament today did so with all his wonted vigour, and gave evidence that he had perfectly recovered from his serious illness of last year, and from any more temporary indisposition which the familiar uncertainties of our climate may have induced. The whole country will rejoice in this fact, and earnestly trust that the King and Queen may be long guarded from any such season of trial as that through which they passed last year.

Now, Sir, we are so accustomed to the form of procedure at the opening of a session that possibly few Members have considered what a very singular procedure it is. We have all come here full of anxiety not only to be informed as to the legislative intentions of the Government, but to receive a full explanation—and, if necessary, a defence—of their conduct of affairs. We have indeed listened to the gracious Speech from the Throne. But a speech from the Throne is necessarily instinct with the spirit of reserve. If it lifts the curtain, it is only a very little. While it gives a recital of measures to be introduced and of accomplished facts in our relations with the world, it does not explain or solve, it does not even touch, the great problems that underlie them. We have here Ministers who can perfectly well step beyond the guarded limits of a Speech from the Throne and could give the information which the country desires. We have, for instance, the President of the Local Government Board and the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who would throw into some such explanation the most refreshing and unaffected candour. But above all, we have, I am glad to say, as things are now constituted, the presence of the man of all others who knows all about everything—the Prime Minister himself—who is no doubt burning with desire to tell us all that we wish to know. But none of these rise to address us. We have instead two Gentlemen, whom I am glad to congratulate on the part they have played, who have no responsibility and no knowledge beyond that which the Minister has thought it discreet to confide to them. They give us a pale echo of the speech from the Throne, which, as I have said, is already pale enough. They may indeed add to that plain and unadorned web some embroidery of their own invention, and the chief interest we have in their speeches arises from our endeavour to discriminate between the part which represents the instructions of the Minister and the part which may represent the indiscretions of the Member. I am sure I shall have the whole House with me when I say the hon. Members have discharged their part well. They have shown that among the silent, or almost silent, Members who, either from modesty, or discreetness, or that spirit of self-sacrifice which we ought all to cultivate, do not often obtrude themselves upon the attention of the House, there are Members just as capable of taking an effective part in debate as many of our more practised or —shall I say—more frequent speakers. But these two Members have not given, and could not give, the information we require, and now, forsooth, it is expected that the Leader of the Opposition should get up and, in the twilight in which we are groping, discuss, criticise, and even answer the Government case which we have not yet heard. This order of procedure has often seemed to me to give a certain formality and almost unreality to the early part of this debate, which is only dispelled when the Leader of the Government in this House rises, makes a clean breast of it, and enlightens our darkness.

I have indulged in these prolegomena in order to account for the fact that my observations will be cast mostly in an interrogative mould. I have a great many questions to ask. I think there never was an occasion when we have had greater subjects occupying the public mind with regard to which Parliament, and especially the House of Commons, was so partially furnished with the facts. There are several quarters of the globe in which our interests are closely and critically involved. I take that part of the subject first, because the questions arising in connection therewith are instant and urgent, whereas projects of legislation are always subject to conditions afterwards. Even after a Bill has been announced in the Speech from the Throne there may be changes in the mind of the Government or the disposition of Parliament, and there may be accidents of Parliamentary time, and other disturbing influences.

The questions I will speak of first are urgent, and we ought to be informed upon them. There is the question of Venezuela, there is Somaliland, there is the small but important question of Kano, there is the condition of affairs in Macedonia, and, above all, there is the great vital question of the settlement in South Africa. I propose, with the leave of the House, to say a word or two upon each of these questions in turn. As to Venezuela, the cloud has happily passed over, but it was a very black cloud, and most of us think it was a cloud that might have been avoided. It was a cloud fraught with the most serious consequences. If we have now emerged from that difficulty, it is none the less our right and our duty to inquire why it was, and how it was, that we were led into it. Minister after Minister has made some sort of apology for it, but I find it difficult to reconcile the one apology with the other. Today there has been furnished to us a great Blue-book, full of despatches and Papers which, I venture to say—except the most recent of them—ought to have been in the hands of hon. Members weeks ago. It is not enough on the very morning of the day when a question is to be discussed to fling on the Table of the House, or the tables of hon. Members, documents such as these. I confess at once that I have only given this Blue-book the most cursory examination. I have not had time to do more. It was perfectly well known that the House would meet on the 17th of February, and it ought to have been so arranged that the Papers up to date, or at least up to about ten days ago, should be placed in our hands in order that we might be able to come to a fair decision upon the questions involved.

There are two main points upon which, barring this new Blue-book, no real definite information has been given — the nature, quality and extent of our own claims, and the nature, quality and extent of the claims of Germany. I am not going to repeat what I said in the short debate we had in the month of December last. I then made the same demand that we should be informed, firstly, of our own claims in regard to Venezuela, and secondly, and I would say almost with more necessity, of the claims of another country—claims which we have undertaken to prosecute until the whole of them are settled. Now, Sir, we have heard of the fishermen of Trinidad. They have a certain kind of claim, and we now gather—this seems to appear from the protocol—that their claims are more than covered by the sum of £5,500. The fishermen of Trinidad certainly, if they were ill-treated, deserved to be compensated. All of us will agree that when a British subject in the ordinary and legitimate exercise of his calling suffers unjustifiable damage on the part of the officers of a foreign Government reparation is due. But the noble Lord who represents the Foreign Office went down to Sheffield, and he assumed at once the grand air over these fishermen—what I may call the *Civis Romanus sum* air, the *Don Pacifico* air. He made this rather remarkable statement. He said—

> "It was said that Trinidad was a very small and out-of-the-way colony."

I do not know that anyone has ever said that. The noble Lord proceeded to say—

> "It might be said that the assaults upon British property and British liberty were small interests."

I am certain that nobody said that. And he went on—

> "That might be so, but we are just as much bound to the poor fishermen of Trinidad and to maintain the interests of commerce in those seas as to protect South African millionaires."

South African millionaires! Who has been protecting South African millionaires? We have been almost at war over these Trinidad fishermen, but when were we at war over South African millionaires? I am quite aware that there were a number of people who, being of a suspicious temperament, imagined that there had been an overdue regard for South African millionaires in some of the proceedings and negotiations connected with the South African war, but those persons were immediately put down, and even shouted down, as "lewd fellows of the baser sort" and altogether unworthy of account. But here is the noble Lord, the spokesman of the Government, who goes down to Sheffield to a solemn dinner of the Sheffield Chamber of Commerce, and not only admits that we have been going to war for the protection of South African millionaires, but he assumes it to be a matter of common knowledge, and institutes a contrast between their case and that of the fishermen of Trinidad.

Well, Sir, one thing is clear. I believe there are certain habits which are regarded as being in the blood, and one of these habits is evidently that of blazing indiscretions. But really in a case like this, where the steps taken involve, or may involve, war, and involve also—remotely and improbably it may be, but still do involve—the possibility of setting not two nations only but two hemispheres in arms, I think we ought to have been told what the actual value of the claims we were going to fight about amounted to. We gather from the protocol that £5,500 covers not only the claim of the fishermen but any other claims on account of damage and outrage. There is great difficulty in finding out the facts upon this matter, because of the settlement that has been come to. A friend of mine who has looked into the Papers tells me that this is made even more doubtful by the Papers which were delivered this morning, but in the Papers of December 2 there is a despatch of Lord Lansdowne where he says—

> "His Majesty's Government will require the immediate payment of a sum equal to that which may in the first instance be paid to the German Government."

The German Government have put in a claim on the first line ground of some £68,000, but they are to be paid £5,500 in cash, in order, I presume, to meet this assumed equality. The rest is to be paid practically immediately in bills spread over some months. The whole effect is now fully disclosed. Behind these poor fishermen, who were so convenient for the noble Lord and the Government, there lies the great body of financial claims culminating in the claims of the bondholders. I venture to say that nothing could be more mischievous than that we should even seem to accept the doctrine, if it deserves to be called a doctrine, that when our countrymen invest in risky enterprises in foreign countries and default follows, it is a public duty to rescue them. Every man who invests money in a country like Venezuela knows what he is doing. It would, I suppose, not be quite accurate to say that great risks always mean high dividends, but it is more nearly accurate if you put it the other way about—that high dividends generally involve great risks; but if the whole power of the British Empire is to be put behind the investor, his risk vanishes, and the dividends ought to be reduced accordingly. So much as to our own claims.

But here I notice an extraordinary printer's error in the King's Speech. In the Clause affecting Venezuela there is no mention whatever of Germany in this matter. That must have dropped out in printing the Speech, because we know that we are not alone in this venture, for we have been closely and inseparably associated with Germany. Let me say at once, that if there are those in this country—and I fear there are—who are of opinion that we ought not in any circumstances to be associated with Germany, I regard that view with no sympathy whatever. No one can be blind to the fact that in recent years in Germany, with regard to this country, there has been a strong and ever keener commercial rivalry; there has been, to a limited extent, a certain feeling of antagonism, amounting in some quarters to antipathy; and there have been in some sections of the Press common abuse and slanderous vilifications of our country. But are we to allow our temper to get the better of us? Are we to retort in like fashion—and I am sorry to see in some journals of which one might expect better things a tendency in that direction — are we to retaliate with similar weapons? No, Sir. What is the proper course for a great self-respecting country in these circumstances? The only effective course, the only course consistent with dignity, is to meet the rivalry with more active, more intelligent, and more instructed competition; to beat down the antipathy by showing that while you always preserve your own interests you are anxious to show the utmost reasonableness and friendliness towards your neighbours; and as to the abuse, treat it with the contempt it deserves. I believe myself that on the part of the great mass of the people of this country there is nothing but friendly feeling towards the great Power Germany, and this friendly feeling is withstanding the mischievous efforts of some persons who are trying to undermine it. I read with great pleasure some words used by the Prime Minister on Friday last, and I not only agree with what he said, but I thank him for having said it. These are his words—

> "Let us remember that the old ideal of Christendom should still be our ideal; and all those nations who are in the forefront of civilisation should learn to work together by practical means for the common good, and that nothing can militate against the realisation of that great ideal so conclusively as the encouragement of these international bitternesses, these international jealousies, these international dislikes."

But where I part company with the right hon. Gentleman and with the Government is in the nature of the arrangements they made, the adamantine bonds with which they bound us, in ingorance of the nature of the German claims. At least I assert that it was in ignorance, although we hear contradictory information gathered from these different Papers and the statements in the House. But certainly the country has been and is in ignorance of the nature of the German claims, and yet we promised never to desist except by common agreement. I say there is some inconsistency as to the nature of the claims. On page 11 of the Blue-book, Lord Lansdowne, writing to Mr. Buchanan, says that "the German Government recognised" that there was a sharp distinction between the character of the British and the German first-line claims. Nevertheless, they ought to stand or fall together. But Count Bülow, in the Reichstag, spoke of "the perfectly identical injury to the interests of both countries," as being perfectly identical to the interests of both countries. The right hon. Gentleman, in the debate we had in December, said that he could not give any precise information on the subject. I am therefore left unaware of what is the nature of the information the Government has on the subject, but at all events, whether they knew or whether they did not know, it was a rash and unwise undertaking that they entered into when they said they would not desist until the last of these claims was settled. I would also venture to question the policy of any close co-operation with Germany in such a matter as this, and for two reasons—firstly, because it is known that the German hand while it is strong is sometimes rather rough, and these are very delicate situations with which we are dealing; and, secondly, because, as we know, there is an impression, I believe rightly founded, that Germany is not so favourable as this country is to that doctrine of immunity from interference which is so passionately held among the people of the United States. Our action was not so likely to be suspected in any way if we had not been so closely interwoven with the Germans. The right hon. Gentleman said, and again I am quite in agreement with him:—

> "We welcome any increase of the influence of the United States of America in the great Western Hemisphere. . . . We have not the slightest intention of interfering with the mode of government of any portion of that continent. The Monroe Doctrine, therefore, is really not in question at all."

I have left out one sentence because, although I entirely agree with the sentiment it expresses, from the peculiarity of its phrasing I think it rather requires that it should be quoted separately. The right hon. Gentleman said:—

> "We desire no colonisation, we desire no alteration in the balance of power, we desire no acquisition of territory."

There is a familiar ring about this phraseology. To everyone who has been watching the history of the last year or two I think that these words are, not by the nature of the sentiment expressed, but by the phraseology, calculated to strike terror into his breast, or at any rate to create suspicion. But I reciprocate, if he will allow me to say so, I homologate, the sentiments he expressed towards the United States, and I am sure that as an instance of friendliness we are glad that the treaty on the Alaska boundary has been ratified, from which we hope good results may follow.

Now as to the course of the negotiations, with which I cannot deal fully because I have not had time to examine the Papers, there is a further question I should like to address to the Prime Minister. When we discussed this question in December, we heard nothing of any other claims. Now the negotiations were largely protracted at Washington, on account, apparently, of the discovery—it was at least a discovery to the people of this country—that there were other claims, nay, that one country, namely, France, had actually a treaty engagement with Venezuela for the early satisfaction of its claim. I wish to know from the right hon. Gentleman whether, when they entered into this business, His Majesty's Government was aware of the existence of these claims, and especially of this arrangement with France? Was he aware of it at the time that we discussed the matter in the House of Commons, because I think we ought to have been informed of so material an element in the case? Apart from all these points, I have something to say that goes deeper. If ever there was a case, it seems to me, for settlement by arbitration, this was one. There ought to be some proportion between the sum involved and the means employed. Why should not so easy a method for so small a case—the easy method of arbitration—have been used? But besides that it was we principally who set up this standing tribunal at The Hague. It was the proposal of Lord Pauncefote; it is one of the many things that the world owes to that eminent man. He was them an who brought forward the proposal for a standing tribunal. The proposal was supported by this country and accepted by the other Powers. Why, therefore, should we not have used it, and thereby gained a double advantage? In the first place—I must use the word, although I have tried to avoid the use of it — we should have avoided the present "mess"; and, in the second place, we should have established a precedent and set an example, which would have been a great forward step towards the peaceable settlement of international questions. I will not say any more on the question of Venezuela.

I now come to Somaliland. The Prime Minister told us last week that the public had not taken the smallest interest in it. Well, the public ought to take an interest, and the public would take an interest, in it if they had any knowledge of it. I am bound to say that it is rather a cruel argument for the Prime Minister to use, practically to say, "Why bother about the cost of Venezuela when Somaliland will cost so much more?" It is not only the cost of this Somaliland imbroglio, but also, he says, it will have more serious consequences far beyond the time when these military operations are brought to a conclusion. Will the right hon. Gentleman give us some idea of what the cost of the Somaliland business will be, and what these ulterior consequences will be, because there is not much in the Papers regarding Somaliland calculated to inspire confidence? The Papers, in fact, show what a haphazard business it is. The whole proceedings, according to the papers, are seriously based upon and fortified by the analogy of the Soudan. There was a Mahdi in the Soudan; there is a Mullah in Somaliland. We for many years in Egypt tried a defensive policy, which led to increase of the Mahdi's power, and then came a series of campaigns by which he was finally crushed. The Mullah, they say, is following in the Mahdi's footsteps—a curious phrase to use—and therefore, they say, "Advance against him." But surely there is a vital difference between the two cases. The Mahdi was in possession of the whole of the Soudan, which was claimed by Egypt as belonging to her; she had no occupation of it, but claimed to have original possession of it. And the greatest argument in favour of pursuing the Mahdi was that it was necessary,—whether a good argument or a bad one, it was at all events a strong argument that it was necessary for the prosperity of Egypt to have control of the upper waters of the Nile. But what is there behind this Mullah? According to the right hon. Gentleman himself, a waterless waste peopled by nomad fanatics. That is his description of the country. How are we going to pursue the campaign against the Mullah? May I ask the attention of the House to this?

The Papers state that "it seems clear that, upon whatever scale operations against the Mullah are undertaken, we cannot predict with certainty that they will result in his capture. He may even deny us an opportunity of trying conclusions with him, and of inflicting on him exemplary defeat. In these circumstances our object must be, if possible, to take some step which will, at any rate, strike a blow at the Mullah's prestige, restore our own authority, and perhaps compel him to come to terms with us.

"It is admitted that these objects are most likely to be obtained by the occupation of the Mudug oasis, and that this can be most conveniently effected by a column using Obbia at its base.

* * * *

"How soon it may be wise to leave Mudug must depend upon our success in getting touch with the enemy during our advance on that place, or upon our arrival there. In that case, we may be able at once to inflict the necessary punishment upon him. It would then be possible, if such a course recommend itself to the Italian Government, to restore *Yusuf Ali* to the control of the district under their authority before we move on to the north. For this purpose it would be necessary to provide him with a fort, suitable armament, and sufficient supplies, so that he would be strong enough to hold his own, and *to deny Mudug to the Mullah should the latter reappear on the scene.* In this event, however, it would seem to be indispensable that, at any rate until it could be seen whether an arrangement could be come to with the Mullah, Yusuf Ali should receive a certain amount o support."

The House will observe how much depends upon Yusuf Ali, the chief man of Obbia. But already, before the expedition has started, Yusuf Ali has been found to be an enemy, he has been deposed and placed on board a man of war, and is now at Aden under observation, in a sort of open captivity. But the plan of campaign goes on:—

"I have indicated the later conduct which we contemplate for the expedition in the event of our successfully punishing the Mullah in the course of our advance upon Mudug, It is, however, very possible that he will have removed his cattle from the oasis and will retire in front of us, so that we cannot bring him to an engagement, or inflict serious damage upon his herds. In that case it may be necessary for the expedition to remain a longer time at Mudug, whilst small forces of mounted troops sweep the surrounding country. *Even so, he may escape punishment at our hands, and we shall have to be content with an unopposed march through the heart of his country to our own Protectorate.* Though a defeat of the enemy would be much more useful, we may hope that even this operation will have a salutary effect in destroying his prestige in the eyes of his followers and of raising our own."

I have read these extracts that the House may see what a haphazard business it all is. This amateurish way of carrying on war may lead us into serious difficulties, and I do certainly hope that the right hon. Gentleman will be able to give a little more information so as to reassure the public mind on the subject.

And now, for a moment or two only, I have a word to say about Kano. I shall not go into the whole of the case. Kano is a most important commercial centre in the kingdom of Socoto between the Sahara and the Niger, and we have had an expedition there which has, fortunately, been sucessful. But the Emir has run away and is being pursued. One of the effects of many of these proceedings may be to drive both trade and influence over the frontier of our sphere of influence into the French domain. But what I particularly wish to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to is this: that on the 9th December† Questions were asked on the subject of Kano. My right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean, said to the Postmaster General, who was in charge of the matter: "I understand there is no present intention of attacking Kano." This was following up some more formal Question on the Paper by a personal appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to say exactly how the matter stood. The answer given was "That is certainly my understanding. The military preparations that are being made are only preparations for the protection of the Commissioners"—that is of the Boundary Commissioners "and their supplies." That requires a little more definite and immediate explanation, because it is perfectly evident that the right hon. Gentleman had been completely misinformed, for it is not possible to reconcile his statement of that day with the facts as they have occurred.

I have only a word or two to say on the subject of Macedonia. Both the hon. Gentlemen who spoke, I think, referred to that question in very proper terms. But the condition of Macedonia has been for a very long time a European scandal; it is a scandal that it should be in such a state after all the efforts made to introduce good government, order, and reasonable conditions of life among the unfortunate people of that province. At the same time it must be remembered that this Macedonian question contains the seeds of disturbances which will go far beyond the Balkan Peninsula. We are glad to know that the Government are addressing remonstrances, and I trust that they will make their remonstrances stiff and effective, and that they will not be merely content with words of course in dealing with it. In a curious paragraph in the King's Speech, there is almost an implication that the Government are not aware of what the scheme of reforms of Austria and Russia is. It is a very fortunate thing that Austria and Russia, who are so deeply concerned, have agreed on a scheme of reforms; but the words of the paragraph rather imply that we are not aware of the nature of that scheme. I trust that the right hon. Gentleman will see that the whole force and influence of this country are thrown in the direction of making the changes as thorough-going as possible.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxvi., 449.

Lastly, Sir, before coming to domestic questions, I turn to the familiar question of South Africa. Sir, the war is over and past. We are making a new departure in South Africa and we are laying, we are building, the foundations of a new life and a new history in that part of the world. I desire to say emphatically, and from the bottom of my heart, that I believe we have all but one wish and one hope, which is, that these foundations should be solid and sure, and that that departure should advance from success to success. We may have had differences of opinion over the war; we may retain our opinions, but the grounds of differences are past and over. Let us work for our common purpose honestly and openly. While I say this I make the demand on the other side, which we are surely entitled to make, that we should all be free to speak out our minds frankly, and to discuss without taunt or reproach the policy which may be pursued. Sir, the Colonial Secretary has been journeying through these colonies in the most laudable endeavour to see for himself, with his own eyes, what is going on. He has shown all the energy and ability that we expected in him when addressing many assemblies of our fellow-citizens, old and new. We all of us most cordially concur in the conciliatory sentiments he has expressed, and in the desire he has evinced for the fusion of the two white races in a common citizenship. But he knew before he left this country, as well as any man, how immense were the difficulties in the way; and I believe that as the result of the conferences and meetings which have taken place in South Africa, the people of this country have begun to see these, too, more clearly than they did at first. We are debarred from discussing the questions involved in what he has been saying and doing on behalf of this country, until we have an authoritative report of what was really said and done, because we have only the fragmentary and sometimes contradictory reports in newspapers, which are almost always of a partisan character on one side or the other. When we receive the authoritative reports of all that has occurred, then we shall be in a position to form a judgment upon it. But there are two points on which I would make inquiry of the right hon. Gentleman. First, of course it was a novel situation, and I want to know what position exactly the Colonial Secretary occupies, with what authority does he act and speak in South Africa? Is what he says subject to the review of his colleagues, or is he entitled, as it were, to act on his own account? I think that is a most important matter, and a situation so novel surely requires defining. Arrangements are being made which imply the approval of the Government, and which imply the approval of Parliament—though we do not hear much of Parliament in them. But when these arrangements and promises are made and exchanged, a more important point still is this: What is the authority on the other side if a bargain is being made? I do not mean to be offensive when speaking of a bargain; we are not dealing with Bishops. Laymen and, above all, public politicians live in an atmosphere of bargain, so that I do not think the word implies anything unhandsome at all. But when a bargain is made which may be a permanent and binding arrangement, who is there that has the authority to make it? Who speaks for the community in making a bargain of that sort? I will give an instance. We read of the possibility of a loan of £30,000,000, chargeable not on the mines, not on the mine owners, not on the capital of the old mines, or the prospects of the new mines, but on the revenues of the Transvaal. Who is there just now that can pledge the revenues of the Transvaal? That is to me a mystery, and I think here we have a strong argument in favour of the earliest possible application of self-government to these colonies, as against the prolongation of the irregular and irresponsible Government which immediately on peace being declared was for some time necessary. That Government has one weakness which, of itself, invalidates its authority. It is a Government which enforces an arbitrary coercion law. Until we get rid of that state of things and ascertain what the wishes of the people, of our fellow-citizens in the colonies are, I do not understand quite how these bargains can be made. But one thing is abundantly clear. The British people cannot rid themselves of responsibility and obligations to the coloured races of the Empire; and we can be no party to any compulsory labour, be the compulsion direct or indirect. It is satisfactory to read the most explicit assurance on this point by the Government of the Transvaal itself. There is a despatch by Lord Milner, dated 6th December, 1901, in which he says—

> "I desire once for all formally to disclaim on behalf of this Administration any desire or intention to compel natives to enter into the service of white employers by any means whatever."

Nothing could be more categorical than that. Then the Secretary of State for the Colonies, on 21st January, 1902, telegraphed—

> "I concur generally, in your statement of the principles which are to guide the native policy of your administration."

Therefore, I cannot understand the references which have been made to a possible policy of taxing the natives to compel them to labour, because such a policy would be directly contradictory of these declarations; and I trust that on this, so vital a matter, the Government will take the opportunity of reassuring us.

Now, Sir, I wish to apologise to the House for occupying it so long, but before approaching home questions, I would just say one word of satisfaction at the success of the great pageant in India, the Durbar at Delhi. I hope it may have all the effects that are expected from it, but I do not think that even the Viceroy himself can think that the success of this State pageant can have a beneficial effect on the weather and the crops. Reading the Speech, one would think that the two things were *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*, but I do not think that even the Viceroy himself would hold that opinion. Now, I want a bridge by which to return from those foreign parts of the earth to the consideration of our domestic questions, and I find it in the Sugar Convention, which is partly foreign and partly domestic. I am not going to repeat the arguments advanced in the short debate on this subject last autumn. No doubt we shall hear more of the matter when the Bill in reference to it is brought before the House; but, really, all our arguments appear to be untouched, either in fact or in theory. The outstanding facts are these—that this policy was adopted mainly to benefit our West Indian Islands, but it is very doubtful whether it will not do more harm than good; in the first place, because it will prejudice their interests in their nearest and best market, the United States; and, in the second place, because, according to the arrangements made, as I understand, in future if any subsidy or charitable relief is given to the sugar industry in the West Indies that will be part of a bounty, and we shall be obliged either to raise a tax against them, or to shut our ports against them. As to the effect at home, no one can tell what it will be on the price of sugar. We have already seen that the Cartel is in full operation in Austria-Hungary, and all the other subsidiary means of keeping down the price of exported sugar, and keeping up the price of sugar consumed in those countries. Of course, if the price of sugar is raised, you punish the consumer and you check a most flourishing industry. That is a direct consequence. But the third effect is the most remarkable—you place the financial and fiscal arrangements of this country in the hands of a foreign Commission in which we have only one vote as against ten. Now, there are two particular points on which I hope the right hon. Gentleman will be able to give us information that we did not fully obtain in December. First, what is the effect of this Convention upon the treaties which have a Favoured-Nation Clause? There were a great many questions asked and answered on this subject before we separated, and we were left in great doubt as to the attitude of Russia upon this subject, which is the principal indication of what will be the general view.

Here we have the reply of the Russian Government—

> "The Russian Note repudiates the idea that another State may in its own interest press for a change in Russian internal legislation, and that that State connected with Russia by a commercial treaty has the right, in the event of Russia not agreeing to its proposals, to apply penal measures against Russian products imported into that country without violating commercial treaties."

That is an explicit expression of the views of the Russian Government. I should like to know how that matter now stands. I have quoted from the *Daily Telegraph* or some other newspaper;

but it is most essential that we should have this despatch and all the Papers bearing on this subject. Then there is the question—How does the Convention affect our self-governing colonies, some of which give bounties? Are we to be under an obligation to shut our ports against their products? And a very delicate question that is. We know the opinions of Germany, Holland Belgium, and Austria. They are all to the effect that we cannot exempt from the operation of the stipulation our self-governing colonies. I have here a report of a remarkable speech by Baron von Richthofen, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the Reichstag at Berlin a few days ago.

It would be too great a tax on the patience of the House to quote it in full; and for that I am sorry, as it is particularly picturesque and effective. He laughs to scorn the idea that we can do as we like with our self-governing colonies, and he describes all the manœuvres by which they drove us into the position in which we are. He discusses the question of forcing the British delegates to recognise their obligations before concluding the treaty, and says—

> "England, who holds nearly all the trumps in this game, would not have consented, and the Convention would not have been signed. Or the non-English delegates had the alternative of avoiding a definite settlement of this question since no practical necessity existed for any such settlement. This was the course adopted by all the delegates of the European Powers, including the Germans. These Powers considered this the right course all the more, because by leaving the question open they were enabled to bring it before the Commission which was about to be held in Brussels."

That is the Commission upon which all our rivals in trade have ten votes against our one. I am reading this for the sake of a phrase which will amuse and interest the House. Referring to the debates in various Parliaments on the subject of the Convention Baron von Richthofen said—

> "The consequence of these debates undoubtedly was that, if I may use a somewhat vulgar expression, the lion's tail was trodden upon."

When I read that I thought it was rather singular, because when we speak of a lion we generally mean the British lion, and I thought, here is the Minister of a friendly Power congratulating himself that he had managed to tread on the tail of the British lion. But the expression really means that by treading on the tail of a sleeping lion you engage his attention. He says—

> "The lion stretched himself in consequence, and the question was thus discussed in greater detail in the British Parliament, and the British Government was thereby compelled to take up a more decided attitude than would otherwise have been the case. Nobody in England had displayed any special interest in the question; it was only brought to the front after it had been discussed in various Parliaments, even in that of Holland," and so on.

Practically it amounts to this—they winked at it, and allowed it to stand as it is, because if they had pressed their view too strongly they would have frightened us out of the Convention. Baron von Richthofen says:—"It is all right; we will go before the Convention at Brussels, and you all know what that means." But here again when we want the naked truth on anything we have always to go to the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. At the same sober and solemn meeting at Sheffield to which I have referred he talks of the Sugar Convention, and says the object of it was to help "those wretched West Indian colonies"—not a very nice phrase—and the noble Lord went on to say that he "claimed that the Sugar Convention was conceived in an Imperialistic spirit." Now we know what an Imperialistic spirit really is. It means that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, not to speak of the House of Commons, is to be the humble servant of a tribunal in Brussels in which there are ten men against our one representative; and it means that if Queensland or Canada sends sugar here we must either charge them a heavy duty or shut our ports against them. That is the Imperialistic spirit. One is inclined to exclaim:—"Oh, Empire, what strange things are done in thy name!" Is this the end and outcome of the Zollvereinic dream? These, at all events, are important matters on which I think the House and the country are entitled to have a definite statementfrom the right hon. Gentleman.

Now I will come nearer home. There is to be a London Education Bill, of course. The controversies of last year are still fresh; they have not been crusted over by the desiccating effects of time. These controversies will be renewed from time to time as occasion offers or requires.

They are not idle disputes on random points, they are episodes in the great perennial battle in favour of democratic government and intellectual and spiritual freedom. They will be renewed as far as the character of this Bill will admit and with such variations as the circumstances of London may contribute. One thing, no doubt, is pretty sure. It will be proposed that the School Board should go. You have massacred the others, and you can barely leave this one standing—one of the finest, the most easily working, most effective and most successful machines ever created by the popular voice—it is necessary to destroy in order to gratify the hostility of reactionary rivals, and the whims of one or two theorists. What are you to put in its place? There is the rub. What is to come in its place? We wait to see; but I am not without hope that there may be some advantageous quarrelling among those who would divide the spoil, and that in the end the County Council, which is the only competent body to take up those duties, will be charged with them in addition to those which it so efficiently undertakes at present. The other great measure to be brought forward, of whose nature there is no indication, is the measure dealing with Irish land, a measure designed to bring a long and angry struggle to an end, and to give peace and contentment to the cultivators of the soil in Ireland. The better acquainted any one of us is with the intricacies and difficulties of this question the more chary will he be of forming any judgment of the scheme in anticipation. We look with the most intense interest for the production of the Government proposal, and in one sentiment we all cordially agree—in congratulating the people of Ireland, and in lesser and more remote degree the people of England and Scotland as well, on the bringing together in friendly deliberation and co-operation of classes which have long been in disastrous antagonism.

Now I must refer to one or two omissions at which I am astonished—one or two Bills conspicuous by their absence, to use the classic phrase, in the King's Speech. The first of these omissions is that no attempt apparently is being made to deal with the great and urgent question of local taxation. There is a Bill mentioned in the omnibus clause in the Speech at the end, to improve the law of valuation and assessment, but as that is grouped with the Patriotic Fund Commission, and other matters of that kind, I do not fancy it is intended to cover the great subject of local taxation. But the Government is pledged, and has been year after year, to deal with this problem. We were told seven years ago that one part of it was so urgent that it must be dealt with, and that the rest might be put off; then we were told that the Royal Commission must report. The Commission has reported. Why, then, after promise after promise, do we not find this included in the Speech from the Throne?

There is a still more serious omission—a question of the very first importance—and that is some attempt to deal with the grave state of the law regarding trade combinations. We all know what has happened. There have been varying decisions causing uneasiness in the labour world, both among employers and those employed. It arises from the fault of Parliament, and it is for Parliament to remedy that fault and to relieve the Judges from the difficulties in which they have found themselves owing to the fault of Parliament. The workmen of this country, whatever may be said of them, are, I believe, the best workmen in the world, and it has been their habit, in truly British fashion, to endeavour to win their way not by violent means but by combination within reasonable limits. It has been the accepted policy of a generation to facilitate and to regulate such combinations for men and employers greatly to the common advantage of both. If they have the right they have the responsibility, masters and men alike, but let the law define what the rights and responsibilities are. I had hoped that the Law Officers of the Crown would have urged on the Government the necessity, and I think the crying necessity, of dealing with this matter, but as this is not to be, I regard it of vital importance that those interested should have an opportunity of putting forward their case in the shape of a Bill in order to have a public discussion in the House—a Bill whereby they think such defects may be remedied. I trust if there is such a Bill introduced the Government will give all proper facilities for its discussion.

As I am on this question of workmen and employers let me say one word as to the degree of want of employment in the country. It may be partial, but in many districts it is intense. But I am sure there is universal sympathy in this House with those who are suffering, and a desire that their sympathy should not take the form of bringing more men under the influence, and as we think the degrading influence, of charity. The Government know better than we do what the exact position of affairs is, but I remember in 1892, when my right hon. friend the Member for Wolverhampton was at the Local Government Board, he issued a circular which attracted general approval, pointing out to the local authorities what they could do in the matter. Have the Government really considered whether the time has not arrived for, at all events in some districts, following the example of 1892? It is infinitely more important to secure the health and comfort and employment of men at home than to occupy all our energies however well directed, in remote quarters of the globe.

Now, Sir, the last paragraph to which I shall refer is the ominous paragraph on Finance. I can quite understand that it is true, as the paragraph says, that a large expnditure is inevitable; the expenditure has advanced and bounded up beyond the dreams of extravagance. No one knows that better than the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself. I believe myself it is more than the people of this country can reasonably and without damage bear, and we must find some means of relieving it. I believe at present there are a great many sources of increasing expenditure. I have jotted down some that occur to me. There are payments for compensation in South Africa on a much heavier scale than was anticipated. I do not know about the garrison in South Africa, whether that is reduced so much as can be ultimately expected; and there will probably be more for repatriation. Again, there is the cost of all those little enterprises and luxuries which we have afforded ourselves in Venezuela, Somaliland, and Kano, all in their several degrees. I do not know whether there will be additional expenditure on the Army Corps system or the new recruiting plan of last year, of which, of course, India will bear her share, although the financial relations between this country and India have been much affected by what has happened in the last few years, and I doubt if we can go on charging India so much as in the past. There are the new colonies in South Africa, whose civil government, outside the loan, will probably cause a large expenditure. Then there are the new grants for education, and let me add the Scottish and Irish equivalents, and when we have a Scottish Prime Minister and a Scottish Chancellor of the Exchequer as well, the people of Scotland are no doubt regarding that money as if it were already in their pocket, and they cannot give it to us without giving it to the Irish people, so that it is a benefit all round. I am not speaking of the financial situation generally, but of the public expenditure, and the point in that expenditure on which, undoubtedly, public opinion has been most fastened, is the expenditure on the Army. No one can say the position at present is satisfactory; there is a good deal of the melting pot, and a good deal of indeterminate energy has been displayed without any great knowledge of what result will ensue. I put aside the deplorable incident in an individual regiment, which has attracted so much attention, and which, I have no doubt, will come before the House, but which is a thing entirely by itself and will be treated by itself. The general question is much more serious, and I hope it will not be prejudiced by loss of time in consequence of discussing the smaller question. A year or two ago the Secretary of State brought in, in a hurry, a great scheme of panic reform—the Army Corps system. I really do not know whether the Government consider that to be the backbone of their organisation, but I confess that I have gone about through the country in ordinary life and I have not met a single man who believes in it or who has a word to say in its favour. I remember at the time I moved from this Bench a Resolution condemning it as unsuitable, and though we had good support from the Unionist side, it was given rather by voice than by vote. Of course we are always thankful for what we can get; if the debate is good, though the lobby is poorly filled. The truth is that these things are not to be done, and ought not to be done, in a hurry. The excuse then was that we should apply the lessons of the war; but at the time the final lessons of the war were not ascertained. We were in the middle of the war. There is a perspective in these things; matters which then were very prominent would at the end of the war fall back to their proper place; and the officers whose opinion it would have been best to take as to the real lessons of the war were most of them in South Africa. I believe the Commander-in-Chief was intercepted by this scheme at Madeira on his way home; he gave his approval of it, and like many other things it has been ever since held up under the ægis of that distinguished soldier. But this is a thing which requires much more deliberation and serious consideration, and I invite Members to brush away all theories and fancies. What we have to do is first to ascertain what our requirements really are. I am not going to examine the Army question tonight, because, I believe, there is to be an Amendment moved on the subject; but I say, let us remember that it is no question of merely adding to or taking from this arm or that force; what we ought first to do is to ascertain the military requirements of the Empire. That is a business for politicians, acting with the help of professional advice. You must do that first. Then, when you know your requirements, call in your experts and be still more largely guided by their advice as to what the particular constitution or organisation or framework of your Army is to be. But the first thing—and we have not got it yet—is to know what in future are the requirements of the British Army, not in the vague way in which we speak after dinner of the protection of these islands, the garrisoning of our great dependencies, the protection of our coaling stations, and the provision of a well-equipped force to be despatched wherever it is required—you must be more definite, and until you are, the rest is all leather and prunella. A distinguished soldier whom I met in the street the other day put it to me in this way. I told him that I was going to say this to the House of Commons, and he said that he had been wanting to see this counsel acted on for many years. He said—

> "Take a business man. If he is setting up in business he calculates what the extent of his business will be, and what it will require. Then he takes his premises and engages his staff. We want to know what our business will require before we set to work to reorganise the Army."

The necessities of the country and the public interest give this question the foremost place among public topics. We are all at one in our object. It is to make our country and its interests secure. It is to lay no unnecessary burden on our people; and lastly, it is to make certain that if they sustain the burden which is imposed they will obtain what they require.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The right hon. Gentleman began his speech by uttering some criticisms upon the mode of procedure by which we begin the work of the session; and I confess that I feel in considerable difficulty at the present moment. I cannot help feeling that the task which our customs impose on the Leader of the House on this occasion is rather a weighty one. He has put me through a catechism which, however else it may be described, cannot be called a Shorter Catechism: and I feel it not only difficult, but absolutely impossible, in the time at my disposal before half-past seven [OPPOSITION cries of "Go on."] to deal adequately with all the topics which the right hon. Gentleman has raised. I am quite aware that there are a large number of Gentlemen who would hasten down at nine o'clock to hear my peroration if I were to go on speaking over the dinner-hour, but I shall endeavour not to trouble them. The right hon. Gentleman's criticisms of our methods of procedure were based on the fact that the debate was begun, according to our ancient habits, by the speeches of the mover and seconder. I think that is the one consolation which we have on these occasions, and I congratulate my hon. friends on the manner in which they have fulfilled a function which, in my opinion, is one of the most difficult and delicate to be performed by the Members of this House. They restrained their observations within the limits of the King's Speech. The right hon. Gentleman, though I make no complaint of it, has not restrained his observations within the limits of the Speech, but has travelled over a vast number of topics, including Army reform, legislation for trade combinations, local taxation, and local government administration, on which it is really impossible that I should follow him. The right hon. Gentleman thinks that we ought to have added to the list of measures in the King's Speech. I notice that there are always two theories and two distinct modes of criticism applied to any Government in respect of its legislative programme. Through all the debate on the Address, and through all the earlier part of the session, the poverty and barrenness of the legislative fare proposed to the House is the constant theme of hon. Gentlemen opposite. Towards the end of the session, the enormous burden thrown upon the House by the ambition of the Government, the congested state of the Government's programme, and the difficulty of getting legislation through is the constant theme of hon. Gentlemen opposite. It is quite impossible for human ingenuity to frame a King's Speech which shall be rich and full enough to satisfy the Opposition's appetite at the beginning of the session and make it sufficiently jejune and thin to meet their criticisms six months later. In these circumstances I make no apology for not having increased the number of Bills which we are asking the House to consider. If the right hon. Gentleman will project himself in imagination into the month of July, he will see, I think, that we have asked the House to do quite enough in the course of one session.

I hasten over these legislative criticisms, and the right hon. Gentleman's observations upon Army administration and local government administration, to what I think the House is more interested in—namely, the questions which he has asked on foreign and colonial affairs. In regard to the Sugar Convention, the right hon. Gentleman asked what view the Government take of the effect of that Convention on the Most-Favoured-Nation Clause. The view we take is that it does not interfere with that clause. The Russians take a different view, and we have offered in these circumstances to denounce our commercial treaties with them. The Russians, I believe, now state that they regard the question as an academic one for the present. Then the right hon. Gentleman asks me what is to happen in respect of the action we have taken to bounty-fed sugar from our own colonies. The line we have taken is perfectly clear and definite. We have never wavered in it from the beginning of the negotiations, and we made the statement of our view an emphatic condition before ratifying the treaty—that in no circumstances will we consent to penalise sugar from our own colonies. Then the right hon. Gentleman asks whether other nations agree with that view. Other nations have been told the only conditions on which we would ratify the Convention, and they have been asked to signify any dissent they may feel from the position which we have taken up. No intimation of dissent has been received; and, therefore, our condition of ratification stands. But the right hon. Gentleman goes further and says: "When the time comes, and colonial bounty-fed sugar comes into the markets of Great Britain, will you not be taken before the Commission in Brussels, and overruled by a hostile majority." There is no such possibility. We have informed foreign countries that we do not mean to have this matter tried before the Commission; and if they, in despite of that observation, were to attempt so to try it, it is evident that they would be helpless and would have no means of coercing us to do that which we have given them fair warning we do not mean to do. Nor would they have any ground of complaint as to the clearness with which we made our views known. We waited until the very last moment before ratifying, in order that if any foreign country did desire to enter a protest at this stage they might do so.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Did not five of them enter a protest?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, my hon. friend is mistaken. The right hon. Gentleman asks about the position of the Colonial Secretary in South Africa and about the loan. As regards the loan, I really do not understand what the right hon. Gentleman's difficulty is. It is true that there is a distinction to be drawn between a Crown colony and a self-governing colony. But a Crown colony is perfectly in a position to borrow money; and I do not understand that the right hon. Gentleman suggests either that the new colonies are incapable of borrowing money or that they could have done it for a better purpose than that of bearing some share of the cost of recent military operations. As to the Colonial Secretary, I hope that he will be back with us at no distant date, and he will be able to give the House fuller information than I am in a position to do. But I may say that, of course, the Colonial Secretary has consulted his colleagues on all the important decisions which he has taken; and we entirely endorse and make ourselves responsible for the general policy which he has declared in South Africa.

Then the right hon. Gentleman asks me about Macedonia. This question has given anxiety—sometimes acute and sometimes sub-acute—to all statesmen in Europe for many years. The condition of wretchedness and mis-government under which the population of these provinces suffer makes them a constant menace to the peace of Europe. The Governments most closely interested by proximity to the scene of difficulty are, of course, Austria and Russia; and these Powers are specially qualified to take the lead in dealing with this problem, because they have the greatest influence over the other Balkan States whose action —or, I should say, the action of some of whose inhabitants—is no small element in the difficulties from which we are now suffering—from which the population primarily, and Europe in a secondary sense, is now suffering. The right hon. Gentleman said he hoped that the reforms which Austria and Russia would suggest to the Powers would be of a thorough-going description. I do not echo that hope, if I rightly interpret the phrase. What Europe wants immediately in that region is not some elaborate constitution which would, if carried out, remedy all the evils and introduce a period of freedom and enlightenment throughout Macedonia, but some improvement in the actual and practical methods of government. I do not believe the law is so utterly defective. It is the administration of the law by Turkish officials and the invasion of the country by Macedonian bands from the neighbouring territories of Bulgaria; these are the two scourges under which the Macedonian population are now suffering; and what we want is a strong and effective and incorruptible Government, so far as such a thing can be obtained, which shall introduce the primary elements of government into those districts, where too often, I am afraid, even the primary elements of good government are absent.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Is the Government aware what the nature of the Russian and Austrian scheme is, and can the right hon. Gentleman say anything about it to the House?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir, I am not in a position to say anything about it at the present moment. I think it would be most inexpedient for me to say anything about it just now. There will be no long delay before we are in a position to give full information to hon. Gentlemen. I do not think I need, or indeed can, with advantage at the present stage of affairs say anything more about Macedonia. The general principles which we desire to see carried out in all these reforms I have sufficiently indicated, and I hope in thus indicating them I carry the general sense and approval of the House with me.

The right hon. Gentleman has asked me about events in West Africa. He did not dwell at great length upon it, but he indicated one supposed danger which I really think has no existence. He seemed to suppose that the military operations being carried on there would drive over the border of the British sphere of influence, into the limits of the French sphere of influence, the trade and commerce which would properly belong to Upper Nigeria. I think that fear is illusory. One important result of the recent military operations will indeed be to clear a great trade route and to make commerce more secure than it is at present. The right hon. Gentleman complained—and I am not surprised at his complaint—of an answer given by the Government about December 9,† in reply, I think, to a question put by the right hon. Baronet opposite. No doubt the terms of that answer would have been different in their character had we then had the information which we received a very few days later. It was, as the right hon. Gentleman will remember, an answer given by my right hon. friend the Post master General in reply to a supplementary question, and was based on the imperfect information which we then had. As the House will see when the Papers are before them, we do not think that we had been kept quite sufficiently informed by the distinguished public servant who has done so much for that region, and it was not really until December 19 that we sent a telegram approving under certain conditions of the expedition to Kano. The House was up at the time, and it was impossible, of course, for us to take them into our confidence.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxvi., 449.

The right hon. Gentleman passed from West Africa to East Africa, and put some very pertinent questions about Somaliland. Those questions were, however, largely based upon a misconception of the meaning of something which fell from me in a speech last week at Liverpool. What I stated there is absolutely the fact—namely, that the military operations in Somaliland, taken by themselves and without the collateral issues he raises, were of much greater importance, measured either by cost in treasure or, I fear, possibly by cost in life, and would have more permanent consequences as regards the districts in which the operations occurred, or with reference to which they were undertaken, than the military operations in connection with Venezuela, and I hope my meaning was not obscure. As regards the cost of the expedition, I am afraid that experience shows us that it is perfectly impossible to carry on military operations in these waterless expanses without cost in proportion, and without a force which, if it is to be adequate, cannot be otherwise than expensive; and though it is impossible for me at this time to give any estimate of the cost, undoubtedly that cost is a thing which cannot be ignored, and which I for one, in the present state of our finances, cannot but deeply regret. Well, then, the question arises, Was such an expedition necessary? I fear it was necessary. I can assure the House that no one was more reluctantly driven to that conclusion than I was; but I think it is a conclusion to which everybody would be driven who examined the facts. It was impossible to allow this fanatical Mullah to raid tribes in Somaliland who were under actual engagements of protection from us, to render the whole of that district practically uninhabitable, to lose all prestige with the natives, and to abandon a country on which our fortress of Aden in a large measure depends We could not allow the unchecked raids of this fanatical Pretender, and since, as the House knows, our first operations against him were not crowned with the success we could have desired, it was absolutely necessary to organise another expedition on a larger scale. We have done it, with the help of the Italians, in such a manner as, I hope, cannot end in military disaster, and will, I trust, permanently check any raids of the invader upon tribes that depend on our friendship, our protection, and our support. Well, I believe that, with a rapidity which I am sure the House will commend, I have answered all the questions of the right hon. Gentleman about foreign affairs, excepting the question he put to me with regard to Venezuela. In respect to Venezuela, he begged the Government to make a clean breast of it, and he bitterly complained that we had not laid Papers before Parliament six weeks, I think he said, before the meeting of the House.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Ten days.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, if the negotiations had concluded ten days before the meeting of the House, of course we should have laid Papers before Parliament. But it was contrary to precedent. It would have been most inconvenient—I venture to say most improper—that in the very crisis of the negotiations, of the difficult and anxious negotiations which had not been brought to a successful termination—we should throw on the Table of the House an unconcluded story of the labours of the Foreign Office in this anxious affair.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am told that a large number of those Papers which are issued this morning are of dates antecedent to 19th December.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no doubt the right hon. Gentleman is perfectly correct, and if he thinks that that would have satisfied him it could have been done; but would it really have illustrated any matter in which the House is interested? What the House is interested in is not in the least what happened before December 19.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Oh, yes it is.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W): There are some most important despatches.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, of course it is not for me to say what hon. Gentlemen wanted; but if I had been in their place, what I should have wanted would have been the whole story, and not merely the first chapters of it. We followed accurately the ordinary practice on this occasion, and I do not think it is worth while spending any time in arguing the point. Hon. Gentlemen have their Papers, and I am sure they will be able to master them before the debates on the Address come to a conclusion. If and when the subject comes up again I may perhaps deal with some of the points which the right hon. Gentleman started, but the questions that seemed to perturb him most are the character of our claims and the character of the German claims, and the grounds and nature of the engagement between the two countries with regard to enforcing those claims.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Of which we know nothing at the present time.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Those are, I think, the main points on which he asked for information. As the right hon. Gentleman is aware, the occasion of our entering into these operations was the insults to the flag and the attacks, the really brutal attacks, on British citizens in the neighbourhood of Trinidad and the seas adjoining thereto. The right hon. Gentleman says these claims were very small in amount. So they were; but the right hon. Gentleman does not argue, I suppose, that attacks upon British seamen and upon the British flag are never worth dealing with unless the sum involved is a large one. I have heard some criticisms of the Government for using their Fleet as a debt-collecting machine, and those are criticisms inconsistent with the attitude which I now understand the right hon. Gentleman to take up, which is that the very small character of these claims estimated in money is a sufficient reason why we should have acquiesced in the absolute refusal of the Venezuelan Government, month after month, not only to give satisfaction, but even to answer or recognise or take the smallest account of our representations. I do not think it was possible to tolerate such things as Venezuela did to our subjects—things never done by any great Power to any other great Power, and which, if they had *per incuriam* occurred, would have been the subject undoubtedly of friendly correspondence and arrangement between them. No Power in the world, I venture to say, but Venezuela would have treated our representations with contempt, and have refused in the smallest degree to meet the just demands we made upon them.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That is not what I meant when I quoted the sum, which I think the world at large was astonished at. What I contend is that there ought to be some relation between the sum demanded and the steps taken to recover it. I explicitly said that where any British subject was damaged in the exercise of his legitimate rights by the improper conduct of an officer of another nation, reparation was due and ought to be exacted.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid the right hon. Gentleman's interruption still leaves me a little at sea as to what his criticism was. I now understand him to say that we should have adjusted the magnitude of the steps we took for reparation to the magnitude of the sum involved—that we ought to have a small blockade if it were a small sum, and a large blockade if a large sum. That does not seem to me to be very practicable. If it be admitted that we have to exact reparation for this insult, an insult of a particularly brutal sort on British seamen, I would put this question: Would you, having other claims, have limited your claims to the very small sums which were, no doubt, the original occasion and justification of warlike operations?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I might answer the question if I knew the nature of the other claims. I have never seen what the nature of the other claims is.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Quite so. The other claims are not the claims of bondholders who tried to get a large percentage out of a more or less insolvent State by the help of British Men-of-war and guns. Not at all. What appear in the Papers as second-rank claims are due to the Venezuelan Government having seized British property, having inflicted, through their troops and by their officers, injury on individual resident persons of British nationality in Venezuela; and the right hon. Gentleman will be the first person to admit that that is a kind of claim which we were perfectly justified in making and perfectly justified in pressing. That is a distinction which, I believe, is fairly accurate with regard to the whole of our second-rank claims. I admit, of course, that there may be claims of which it is difficult to say whether they should properly be placed in the first rank or the second rank. As regards the first-rank claims, you may say that they chiefly depend on brutal attacks on British seamen and insults to the British flag. As regards the second-rank claims of Great Britain, they are of the kind I have just described. They arise out of attacks by Venezuelan soldiers and officers, forced requisitions, and matters of that kind, and constitute claims which I think we were right in making and right in enforcing. Venezuela has bound herself to make some kind of equitable arrangement with the bondholders. I suppose nobody complains of that. The right hon. Gentleman asked me about Germany. He has quoted, and quoted accurately, from the Blue-book a statement made by the German Ambassador that they admitted that there was a difference between our first-rank claims and their first-rank claims. Again, I say, the difference is really one of degree. There are German claims, I believe—in fact, I know—which it would be extremely difficult to distinguish from British first-rank claims, except that the outrages on persons occurred on land and not on water. On the other hand, I have no doubt there are a large number of German first-class claims which would come rather under the description I have given of British second-class claims. But there is this important distinction between the two, which I beg the House to keep in mind. We do not profess to have examined critically, case by case, the claims put forward by our countrymen in regard to damage inflicted upon them by Venezuelan troops. The German first-class claims, which amount to over £60,000, have been most carefully examined by the German Foreign Office and by the German legal advisers, and, I think, certified. I do not believe that it is denied by the Venezuelans themselves that all these cases are genuine; that they are no bogus claims; no extravagant attempts to extract money from the Venezuelan Government. Very well, then, in what consists the criticism against us? The Germans had claims against Venezuela, and we had claims against Venezuela, and it was suggested that we should make common cause. The Germans had ample international justification for going against Venezuela alone, and it is alleged that we should have acted alone. Would separate action have been a benefit to Venezuela? Could you imagine that two absolutely independent blockades could have gone on at the same time, and that that would have been advantageous to Venezuela? I do not believe that it would have made the position of Venezuela any easier. What I say is that such a course would have been recommended by no one. If you are to work with Germany, as surely you must under the circumstances I have described, is it or is it not proper to say to Germany "You must not abandon us, and we will not abandon you." Otherwise, of course, the Venezuelans would have tried to make separate arrangements—to play off one Power against another, and to produce as much international difficulty and friction as they could. But it may be said, "That may all be very true. The advantages of your policy may be very clear, but is it not an enormous disadvantage which more than outweighs the advantages described, that it should be put in the power of Germany to drag you on and on in a quarrel which may have been righteous and just in its conception, but which they carry to an extraordinary and extravagant length, and to require you to employ yourselves to enforce German claims which have no just foundation or basis?" I say there is no such demand. Recollect that the total amount of the first-rank claims of Germany and England put together, both of which were absolutely justifiable, amounted to £68,000 or £69,000 in all—an amount which I am sure a great many hon. Gentlemen I am now addressing could write a cheque for without feeling inconvenience. As regards the second-rank claims, both of Germany and Great Britain, be it remembered that by our original arrangement with Germany it was impossible that we should be dragged on into indefinite hostilities because we had always agreed that they should be submitted to arbitration. The original arbitration was not the Hague arbitration, but it was an arbitration perfectly fair to Venezuela, because what we suggested was that these second-rank claims should be taxed by a Commission, in which there should be, so far as the British claims were concerned, one representative of Great Britain, one of Venezuela, and, in case of difference, an overs-man or arbiter. The same arrangement was to be adopted in regard to Germany, so that Venezuela would have had a full say in discussing the character of these claims. We, therefore, always contemplated as regards second-rank claims that we, Great Britain, or Germany, should go to arbitration. And it was not possible to go on fighting for second-rank claims, because Germany herself had assented to the broad principle of arbitration which we also hold. I hope I have with lucidity and brevity explained the general policy. I do not think it is open to any of the comments which the right hon. Gentleman has made upon it in an ignorance for which he is not to blame. I quite agree he has not had time to study the Blue-book, but when he has had time to do so, I think he will see that the general line of policy which I have indicated is the right policy to pursue; and I am convinced that he will agree with us that, broadly speaking, this negotiation has been carried on by us with a great regard to the feelings, not only of the American Government and people, but with a great regard to Venezuela itself. We have not proved ourselves hard or brutal; we have only intervened when intervention became absolutely necessary in the cause of national honour. And though we have interfered, we have made that interference as little injurious as possible to the country with whom we were formally in a state of hostility; and probably there never was a state of war lasting through all these weeks in which there was less suffering, or less damage inflicted upon a weak belligerent than on this occasion.

I really believe, though it may sound ambitious to say so, that I have answered all the comments except those relating to legislation and Army administration which the right hon. Gentleman has addressed to me. I have not the smallest complaint to make as regards the spirit in which he has spoken. I recognise that it is his business to put questions. I hope the House will admit that I have not shirked my share of the responsibility, but have endeavoured to answer the right hon. Gentleman with as great clearness and directness as I have been able to command. I trust the House will be content with the defence I have made on behalf of the Government as a whole; and, at all events, will wait for any further elaboration of the topics on which I have briefly and lightly touched this evening until the substantial Amendments are made to the Address of the Government.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N) said that His Majesty's gracious Speech congratulated Parliament on the successful termination of the Venezuelan question. But there was no credit due for this to the Government. His Majesty's Ministers had only succeeded in making themselves ridiculous. That had been the most conspicuous thing in connection with the whole affair. He remembered that in the month of December last, when this question was brought up before the House, a spirit of levity was shown by Members who sat on the Government Benches, who thought it was a very small affair. But he believed that in the meantime it had been found to be a very serious affair, and the Prime Minister had himself confessed that the Venezuelan "mess" had been a most anxious time for the Government. This matter, which was supposed to be of such small consideration, had lasted over two months, and two of the greatest Naval Powers had engaged their fleets upon it at considerable expense. Great risks had been run, and this country had only escaped an imbroglio with the American Government and nation in regard to the Monroe Doctrine, which was very dear to them.

He believed that it was the general opinion throughout England that they had been using a Nasmyth steam hammer in order to crack a nut, when they considered that the first-rank claims only meant the payment of £5,500 to each of the Allies.

As his right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition had stated, he thought that the questions which had been put in the first line by the Government were really of small moment. He quite agreed that some of them required inquiry, which however he was now afraid would not be given. He had looked into the Blue-book which had been laid on the Table of the House today, and he found, in spite of all the further explanations which had been given, that it was perfectly clear that out of the eight cases which were relied upon, three of them at least were connected with smuggling or with carrying contraband to the insurgents against President Castro's Government. The Island of Trinidad was fixed like a crescent on the North-East Frontier of Venezuela, and the distance between the extreme points was only a few miles. Further, it was a matter of history and fact that the Islands of Trinidad and Patos had been used from time immemorial as the basis for carrying on contraband trade with Venezuela. He had read some of the affidavits which were given in the Blue-book, and he found that many of the witnesses were themselves Venezuelans who had adopted English names, and in whose veracity he would not feel any very great confidence. He did not say that they told untruths, but he said that their evidence would not be taken in any court of law in England as being of the greatest weight. If they were to believe *The Times* newspaper the danger might still not be at an end, for on the 16th inst. *The Times* said:

> "We are not altogether clear of the Venezuela mess, for, as our Berlin correspondent points out, contingencies are at least conceivable which might still confront us with new phases of the question not very unlike the old ones."

He was afraid that the Government would have the painful feeling of being attacked by an enemy in their own house. The *St. James's Gazette* said:

> "From whatever source the evil inspiration of the Venezuelan adventure came, the Government of Mr. Balfour are responsible. We should see their fall with regret, but short of their dismissal from office, we hope that the House of Commons will find a way to read them a sharp lesson."

It was quite evident that even Ministers themselves did not think very highly of their own conduct, because the noble Lord the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs admitted that the Venezuelan mess was indeed a mess, and the President of the Local Government Board said:

> "As Lord Rosebery said, we muddled through somehow or other. So long as we got through, then, with the right side uppermost, it did not much matter whether we muddled through or got through in some other way. So long as we got through with the British Empire uppermost that was all Britishers cared about."

Now, with reference to the bondholders, the Prime Minister assured the House that this war was not conducted for the benefit of the bondholders. But the noble Lord in December[†] stated that it was the bounden duty of the Government to protect bondholders in all parts of the world.

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. I said specifically in answer to the hon. Gentleman that we would never have undertaken these operations for the bondholders, and that they were undertaken for what has since been known as the first-rank claims.

MR. SCHWANN said that the noble Lord stated that where the interests of bondholders were attacked England ought to go to their rescue. He himself pointed out then, and would now repeat, that there were a great number of bonds in default in many parts of the world, and he thought it was highly undesirable that the Government should use the forces of the country for the purpose of recovering bad debts for investors, who should take their own risks. It was very strange that the Chairman of the Government Stock Investment Company took a very different view of what the Government had done. He said that they ought to be grateful to the Government for doing something for the first time towards taking up the interests of bondholders.

[†] See (4) *Debates*, cxvi, 1263.

As far as he himself knew, it was the first time that any British Government had declared war in the interests of the bondholders, and he hoped it would be the last. He would point out that the bondholders who invested their funds in the Venezuelan New Conversion Debt, 1881, would reap a rich harvest. They bought at £25, and the shares were yesterday quoted at £38. The initial mistake in the business appeared to him to be the alliance with Germany. If England had gone to work as she did in Nicaragua, and had given the United States notice that the Nicaraguan Government were in default, the United States would have been perfectly agreeable to England sending one or two vessels. In that instance, the Nicaraguan Government saw it would not do to have a long contest, and within a couple of days the blockade was raised and England obtained what she wanted without any long or dangerous alliance with any other country. The Germans themselves had a proverb about people who were not good to crack nuts with. Admiral Dewey said the Germans had no naval manners. He himself did not wish to speak evil of them, and only wished they would mend their manners and enter into real friendly relations with England. Even the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, after a scathing review of German methods, says:

> "Consequently no one is our sincere friend; we encounter mistrust in all quarters; and thirty years after Sedan we are still looked upon as a *parvenu* with the characteristics of an intruder. Wherever a sunbeam falls we (Germans) want to be there 'in order to warm ourselves.'" "Yet" (as the critic goes on to observe) "Germany desires to build higher and higher the barricades of tariffs behind which she is intrenched. That combination excites misgivings, umbrage is taken, and 'friendships are sacrificed.'"

He trusted that in future they would be able to maintain a real alliance with Germany, and would be able to work with her in enlarging the boundaries of civilisation. At the same time, he thought that in a matter in which German interests clashed with English interests, it would be far better to work singly, and that each country should paddle its own canoe, and steer clear of its own difficulties.

It being half-past Seven, the debate stood adjourned till this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament." — (*Mr. Gretton.*)

Question again proposed. Debate resumed.

MR. SCHWANN, continuing his speech, said that when interrupted by that one touch of Nature which makes the whole world kin, he was expressing the hope that in the future Germany would walk hand in hand with this country in the paths of civilisation, and he was suggesting that loyal co-operation would be quite as successful as high-handed sentiment, but that presents of statues to the United States of America, and presents to the Sultan, were not necessarily sentiments of amity. He had noticed that in any negotiations we had with Germany we had always come worse off. He personally attributed that to the incompetence of our Foreign Office. That had been clearly shown in regard to the negotiations in connection with Venezuela. The country had had a clear statement of what our demands on Venezuela were, and the public had been able to take a clear view of the situation, and it had not redounded to the credit of the Government.

He was afraid that in other quarters of the globe the Government were preparing fresh disasters for themselves. The Prime Minister, at Liverpool, referred to Somaliland, and said:—

> "We are at this moment, for example, engaged in military operations in Somaliland. I do not think the public have taken the smallest interest in it; but the cost will be more than Venezuela both in men and money, and the effect of the operations will be far-reaching."

He thought that the Prime Minister had made a great mistake; the public was taking a great interest in all this expenditure of money in the wars in which we were engaged; they saw how easily they were entered into, but they did not see how we were to get out of them. They had been told that the Venezuelan question was to be settled in a fortnight, and it had lasted two months; and that Somaliland was to cost only a quarter of a million, but if we were to pursue the Mullah all over the country, everybody knew that the cost of carrying supplies in Africa was enormous, and nobody could see what the extent of our liabilities would be.

There was a prospect of another muddle in North Nigeria. Referring to the occupation of Kano by our forces, he accused the Government of ingratitude, asserting that it was largely owing to the fact that the chiefs of Kano and Sokoto remained loyal to the Niger Company that England was able to make good her claims to Nigeria against France and Germany when the delimitation of that part of Africa took place. Sir F. Lugard's action might have serious consequences. He was said to have acted precipitately and without any command from the Foreign Office, but the Foreign Office was responsible all the same. Kano and Sokoto were peopled by Mahomedans, and if the standard was raised against the "infidel Christian" we might have a repetition of the Soudan trouble in West Africa, the area of North Nigeria was not to be counted by thousands, but by hundreds of thousands of square miles; the population was counted by millions, and the whole of the Chad Basin was a slumbering volcano which one spark of religious fanaticism might set in eruption. He was afraid that we might find that in that case we had again put our hands into a hornets' nest. He would not labour the subject, as it was just possible that when Members had digested the Blue-book some Amendment would be moved to the Address with regard to this matter.

With regard to the Venezuelan question they must take into consideration, when pressing their claims, that President Castro was attempting to put down one of the worst revolutions that the country had ever seen, and that it was not easy for a man who had the greatest difficulty in paying his own army and obtaining his own supplies to meet all claims made against the State at once. On the question of Army Reform, he advocated the appointment of a Commission, with full power to make the radical changes necessary to secure for the country an adequate and efficient army. The disclosures in connection with the Grenadier Guards showed that no great improvement would be made in the Army system until all regiments were directed and officered by professional men. He recalled the fact that Sir Clinton Dawkins indulged in some reminiscences at a dinner at the Article Club at which he was a guest, and said that, as a young man, he had been warned against a certain General who was described to him as "a damned professional soldier, and ought to be cut by everybody." But the army would never be efficient until it was controlled by professional men. A case came before his (Mr Schwann's) own notice. A young soldier, who had served in South Africa and had returned, called upon him and stated that he wanted to enter the Reserves; he had applied to the War Office, and his claim was not admitted; he had been in the regiment in which his father and his grandfather had both previously served; and for two consecutive years he had secured the prize for being the smartest man. He had also a certificate of education, and yet the War Office refused him permission to enter the Reserves. He (the hon. Member) had written to the War Office and pointed out that this was a man that ought not to be refused; that such a man not only was a good Reservist, but also acted as a recruiting sergeant, which was quite contrary to what many young men who had returned from South Africa had done.

He regretted that the King's Speech contained no indication of any measure to make provision for the greater safety of railway servants. He pointed out that since the compulsory attachment of automatic couplings on some of the American railways the percentage of deaths and injuries to railway workers had decreased to a large extent, and he hoped that promises made in this direction had not been forgotten. The Government were to be congratulated on the success of the new Licensing Act, and he was glad to see it was proposed to extend the Act to Scotland, where it was certainly needed. He congratulated the Government that the almost immediate effect of the Licensing Act had been to lessen the practice of pawning among the poorer classes. More money now found its way home, and the necessity for the pawnbroker was not so great as before the passing of the Act.

The Irish question was too large for him to deal with on that occasion, but on that side of the House the land proposal would be received with interest and a desire to carry through any Bill that promised to remove the state of agrarian warfare which had existed so long. He believed that the British public would be ready to pay any reasonable sum to bridge the division between the landlords' demands and the amount tenants were willing and able to pay. He hoped that the visit of the Colonial Secretary to South Africa would be followed by the best results, expressing his strong opposition to the legalising of forced labour there.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said he rose only to call attention to two matters connected with the Metropolis in which, as a London Member, he had a special interest. The principal question on which he wished to say a word was that of education. His right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition had said earlier in the evening that he hoped if any change was made in the constitution of the London School Board, to which he referred in a most eloquent and friendly manner, it would be transferred to the London County Council, but he (Mr. Lough) hoped that it would not be too readily concluded that the view of the Liberal Party generally was that the new educational authority for London should be the London County Council. He was in favour of an *ad hoc* authority, which was justified by the great success of the London School Board. The most influential opinion expressed among the teachers and managers of the London School Board was that at any rate a great part of the controlling authority should be by a directly elected body.

Coming to the appointment of a Royal Commission to consider the question of locomotion and traffic in London, he desired, in the first place, in the name of the London Members, to enter a protest against such an important and delicate matter, affecting the health and development of the Metropolis, being suddenly referred to a Royal Commission without some communication being first made to the Members for London, or to those who had devoted many years to the study of the subject. The responsibility for that rested, of course, mainly with hon. Gentlemen opposite, because the very large majority of the representatives of the Metropolis were supporters of the Government. But surely before the Royal Commission was announced, they ought to have had communicated to them, in some friendly way, the reasons for the action to be taken and the proposed terms of reference, and then opinions should have been invited in regard thereto. He was bound to say that the reference was a most extraordinary one, viz., to "consider the organisation and regulation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic." That reference might have been an excellent one, if they had had a clean slate to deal with, but in this matter they had not. Did it not seem somewhat of an interference with the work of the Chief Commissioner of Police? How could they regulate vehicular traffic, he would like to know? The second part of the reference was just as extraordinary. It asked the Commission to suggest some authority or tribunal to which all schemes of railway and tramway construction of a local character should be referred. Why should these matters be taken out of the control of Parliament? This work was going on steadily day by day; there were all sorts of schemes being carried out in London, and many others were projected. What was to become of the London railway and tramway schemes which were to be brought before Parliament this session, and upon which a great deal of money had been or was to be spent? Were they to be hung up until the Commission had reported? It seemed to him that the Government had made a great mistake in thinking that these schemes could be brought before a Royal Commission which could throw no special light on such matters. He thought that London Members on the Opposition side of the House had great reason to complain of the constitution of the Commission. No doubt, personally, the gentlemen selected would be most excellent members, but the fact remained that the whole body of progressive opinion in London was practically unrepresented. It would have been wiser for the Government to have selected for the Commission men closely connected with London, like the members of the County Council, and, therefore, with the necessary knowledge of the problems of its traffic. Why should Sir George Barbour, for instance, have been selected to act as chairman? He was no doubt an eminent Indian official, but of what especial value would experience gained in India be in dealing with the problem of London traffic? And again, the only representative of that side of the House on the Commission was the late Attorney General, the hon. Member for Dumfries Burghs. He was a Scotchman and a lawyer, but did those qualifications specially fit him to deal with this great London question? Why had not someone more closely identified with London been chosen in his place? Again, why was there such a strong railway element introduced? Why had the settlement of these delicate questions been put in the hands of men who, by their action in the past, had proved that they thought more of the development of their own large interests than of serving the needs of the Metropolis? He could not understand why there was such a strong representation of the railway element. Further, he would ask why was not Labour represented on the Commission, seeing that it was so deeply interested in the question. He would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to modify the composition of the Commission, and also to inform the House what was to become of the schemes which were to be brought before Parliament this session. Were they to be hung up until the Commission had reported?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The complaint of the hon. Member for West Islington is that the Royal Commission has been appointed in too great haste and without consultation with the London representatives and local authorities. I think the hon. Gentleman will find that he stands alone in this opinion. Since the Commission has been appointed I have received many communications with respect to it, but not one on the lines of the hon. Gentleman, who seems to think that, among other bodies, the London County Council will be unduly prejudiced by the appointment of the Commission. He does not seem to be aware that the London County Council has been pressing for months for the appointment of such a Commission with some such reference. The hon. Member seems to hold that the London County Council is not satisfied either with the Commission or the reference. My information is that they are not dissatisfied. On the contrary, they recognise that what the Government have done has gone a long way towards the carrying out of their own wishes. Then the hon. Member complains of the reference. He gave it a most extraordinary interpretation. He seems to think the Commission has been appointed, not merely to inquire, but actually to administer. It has no administrative power whatever. If it had it would, no doubt, constitute a precedent of a very remarkable character, but if the hon. Member will kindly take the trouble to read the terms of reference more carefully he will see that its duty is to advise on the methods that would be most effectual in developing tramway and railway communication in London. It will not be called upon to decide as to the merits of any particular scheme, but it will have to advise whether it is desirable in the case of railways and tramways to appoint a body constituted on lines similar to the Light Railways Commission or the Traffic Commissioners of New York. That is the very point on which the London County Council laid the greatest stress, I do not desire in any way to prejudge any conclusion at which the Commission may arrive, but in any case I think the hon. Member is almost alone in the attitude he has taken up. He asks what will happen to the schemes now before Parliament. In appointing this Commission the Government were aware that one of the arguments against that course of action was the possibility that enterprise might be checked; but they came to the conclusion that on the balance of considerations it was desirable to appoint one, even at the risk of delaying the carrying out of schemes which might otherwise have been brought forward. It is not possible to lay down any general scheme as to the treatment the House may extend to schemes that come before it during the period of inquiry; but probably there will be some schemes which it will be desirable to stop on the second reading, others which may be sent to a Committee, and a third section as to which the promoters must be prepared to take the responsibility of going before a Committee, knowing, of course, that the Committee will be aware that the whole subject is being investigated by a Commission and that consequently it may not see fit to pass the preamble of the Bill. It is not possible to be more explicit on that subject. Another question raised by the hon. Member was as to the constitution of the Commission. The hon. Gentleman has mistaken the principle on which members of the Commission have been selected. It was felt that special interests should not be strongly represented—if represented at all on the Commission. But it was desired to have a very strong Commission, because this is a very important and difficult question. Anybody who reads the names will admit that the Commission is a very strong one. The hon. Member has made an attack on the Chairman, and has suggested that he is not a fit person to preside. But everybody who knows Sir David Barbour must be aware that he is a man of the very highest capacity. For work of this kind you must have a man not only of the highest capacity but one also of the inclination to devote himself to it.

MR. LOUGH: I only complained of his want of local knowledge.

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: That local knowledge can be acquired in the course of the inquiry, seeing that it is the duty of a Commission to take evidence; and I am sure that long before the Commission reports Sir David Barbour will be thorough master of the subject. As to the representation of the London County Council, I am not aware that that body have found any fault with the representation given to them. They have two Members, one belonging to the Progressive and the other to the Moderate Party, and both gentlemen take a very great interest in the question of railway and tramway communication in London. I am not prepared to accede to the hon. Member's suggestion that a working man should be put on the Commission. I am not desirous that any special interest should be represented. I would reduce rather than enlarge the number of Commissioners, and I should be very reluctant indeed to put on the representative of any special interest who would serve on it with the deliberate object of dealing with the question in one particular way. That is not the type of Commissioner I have sought to obtain. I am perfectly aware that certain Royal Commissions are constituted on the principle of putting a number of partisans on the one side, and another set of partisans on the other. Sometimes it is almost impossible to avoid that particular method of constituting a Royal Commission, but where it is possible I think it is very desirable to avoid it, because I do not believe that on the whole you get the best results from a Commission constituted on that principle.

* MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I desire to refer to certain aspects of foreign politics to which the King's Speech itself devotes rather more space than has usually been the case of recent years. Amongst those questions of foreign politics there are two, one of which might have attained dimensions of great gravity, whilst the other is becoming more and more serious every day, and may at any time attain the position of an international question of the first importance. I should not have thought of coupling together two such entirely different questions as Venezuela and Macedonia had not the Prime Minister at Liverpool a few days ago placed them in the same juxtaposition. The right hon. Gentleman used a very singular argument. He said, in effect, "How can you object to co-operation between two European Powers with regard to Venezuela when you advocate international co-operation with regard to Macedonia?" The two positions are diametrically opposite. In the case of Venezuela, what was objected to by

responsible critics, was not the fact that Great Britain intervened for the purpose of redressing certain wrongs, but the hard and fast agreement between ourselves and Germany, who, as was considered on the other side of the Atlantic, had different aims and objects. The chief objection was to the particular method and the terms of that co-operation. It was, moreover, of a temporary, incidental, and accidental character.

With regard to Macedonia, the case is absolutely different. There, in common with other great Powers of Europe, we are under definite treaty obligations to intervene. Under the Treaty of San Stefano Macedonia was taken from Turkish rule, and placed temporarily under Bulgarian auspices. For various reasons Europe, at the Berlin Congress, thought fit to place Macedonia once more under Turkish rule. I do not desire to enter into the merits of the question. I still think that the solution provided by the Treaty of San Stefano was not a satisfactory solution, because it laid more store by the wishes and needs of the Bulgarian population than by those of the other numerous races which form part of Macedonia. But this must be obvious; that the European Powers, of which we are one, having taken upon themselves the responsibility of restoring that great province to Turkish rule, are absolutely bound, morally and by treaty, to see that the inhabitants do not suffer by that action. We have been promised in the course of a few days some Papers as to the reforms which are being urged upon the Sultan of Turkey by Austria-Hungary and Russia, with the assent of this country and other Powers. Until those Papers are presented it is impossible to go into details. But this question is not a new one. There has been a chronic state of misgovernment in Macedonia for years, and it has recently become aggravated mainly by action instigated from Constantinople itself, but partly also by the fact that certain extremists in Bulgaria, being driven to desperation by the oppression of their kinsmen over the border, have resorted to methods in themselves indefensible, but the outcome of the abominable state of things there prevailing. We have heard a great deal about the Bulgarians, but, after all, they are not the only, perhaps not the chief, sufferers. For years tribal feuds have been going on between the Albanians and the Servians, and if the matter is looked into one will perhaps be driven to the conclusion that the Servians have had more to suffer than any other race in Macedonia. In the southern part of Macedonia also Greeks and Kondzo-Vlacks have had their grievances, and the whole matter has been fermented by the state of misrule which prevails. The Turkish Government, by sowing dissension, and often by the employment of provocative agents, have produced a condition of affairs which they have proceeded to repress in accordance with their usual methods. That is obviously a state of things which Europe ought not to tolerate, and that it should have been tolerated for so many years constitutes a serious reflection on the indifference of the great Powers. I would urge the Government to do their utmost to secure that the reforms now being pressed upon the Sultan should be manageable reforms. I agree with the hope of the Prime Minister that they will be of a simple character. What is chiefly needed at present is adequate guarantees for life and property. It would be impossible at the present stage, with the divisions which exist between different races and creeds in Macedonia, to secure an absolutely permanent settlement. But we can, and ought, to insist on a reasonable amount of law and order being restored, and that those who at present are in daily and hourly jeopardy should have a reasonable amount of security.

How is that guarantee to be secured? We do not know what this proposed scheme of reform is to be, but, according to reports, Macedonia is to be divided, for administrative purposes, and a Christian Governor appointed. I have considerable doubt whether a Christian Governor who is a Turkish subject would be of much avail in the present state of Macedonia. Something of the kind was tried in Crete, with the result that the condition of affairs was worse than before. A Christian Governor does not command sufficient respect among the Mohammedans, who form the principal part both of the army and of the official classes, and he would not be treated with sufficient respect from Constantinople. In addition to that, the agencies which are constantly at work would be intriguing against him, with the result that, although the Powers might be pacified ostensibly by such an appointment, the evil of misrule would, as a matter of fact, continue. The only guarantee for sound administration is that the Governor who is to carry out the work of administration under the scheme of reform should not be an Ottoman subject. Unless the Powers are able to devise a scheme under which such an arrangement is possible, I am afraid the position of affairs will become worse and worse, and that before long we may be brought face to face with one of the most serious European complications, and possibly conflagrations, of recent years.

The Government have a serious responsibility in this matter, partly in conjunction with other Powers, and partly on account of its action in connection with the Berlin Treaty. More important even than the points I have urged is the necessity of an adequate sanction for the carrying out of these reforms. It is not the practice for the Turkish Government to yield except to a certain show of coercion, nor is it lawful under the sacred law for the Sultan to yield unless there is some such show; therefore, unless Austria-Hungary and Russia can, with the assent of other Powers, use some such means, there is little hope for the future. Fortunately we have instances in the Balkan Peninsula of provinces which have been reclaimed under the influence of good administration, such as that of Baron de Kallay in Bosnia, and if in Macedonia some scheme of reform, however simple or modest, can be carried out under the auspices of a European administrator, simply preserving the suzerain rights of the Sultan, I think a greater step in the direction of reform will have been taken than is possible by any other method under present circumstances. But no such arrangement can be of more than temporary advantage. The problem lies too deep to be solved so simply. Where you have various races whose historic course has been interrupted by invasion, it is only natural, when there is some hope of the rule of the invader coming to an end, that the old jealousies and ambitions should revive. But even a temporary effect of a beneficial character may have the greatest possible influence in maintaining the peace of Europe, and in securing some elementary guarantee of life and property. I hope, therefore, the Government will leave no stone unturned to secure a practicable scheme of reforms, adequately thought out and adequately enforced.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): Before the noble Lord replies, I wish to put to the Government certain questions, one of which concerns Venezuela and the Foreign Office, and the other the Colonial Office, the latter arising out of a most extraordinary Parliamentary Paper which has been placed in the Vote Office since seven o'clock this evening.

The question of Venezuela was well dealt with by my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition, but in language less strong than many of us would wish to employ. I wish to elucidate the real meaning of the defence of the Government as to our relations with Germany in this question. The Prime Minister last Friday repudiated in the strongest possible terms the suggestion that the influence of the German Emperor himself, during his recent visit to this country, had been used for the purpose of tying up the relations of this country with Germany in a way that would appear to constitute a very dangerous alliance, and on a question in regard to which an alliance with Germany was specially dangerous to the interests of this country. The Prime Minister said that during that visit no arrangements were made and no business done. That denial is very strong, but so are the facts as laid before us by the Government themselves. The despatches which have just been circulated on this point are precisely the same as those we received on the last day of the sittings in December last. In the principal despatch, the one that ties up our interests with those of Germany in a way which is unprecedented in questions of this kind, the opening words are, "Foreign Office, November 11. The German Ambassador informed me this evening," while the Memorandum attached to this, and communicated by the German Ambassador, is dated "London, November 13." What has struck the country, and ought, I think, to be further explained, is the fact that neither Lord Lansdowne nor the German Ambassador were in London on the dates here given. As a matter of fact, Lord Lansdowne and the German Ambassador were under the same roof at the time these transactions occurred—viz., from the 10th to the 15th November. The Prime Minister has complained very bitterly of Lord Rosebery for introducing the analogy of Mexico. In that case, in the first instance, we took joint action with France and Spain in a matter of a similar description. But that action followed the ordinary precedents, and was entirely different from the action taken on this occasion. Instead of our claims being tied up with those of the other Powers, as in the present instance, absolute liberty was left to other Governments to come in—the United States were specifically asked to come in—and liberty was left to recede at any time. As a matter of fact, we did afterwards recede. A convention provided for the appointment, by each of the three Powers, of a Civil Commissioner, with full authority to determine for each Power all questions as to the money to be recovered; each Power had control over its own action.

In asking these questions specifically as to the authority, precedent, and origin of this proposal, I should like to put it to the House that it was most dangerous to tie us up in this way. In the case of Venezuela the question is one of peculiar delicacy, and it is most dangerous to tie up our interests with those of Germany. In America, Germany has undoubtedly been suspected of having designs on the southern province of Brazil which are at variance with the Monroe Doctrine. In this country there is an overwhelming opinion in favour of the Monroe Doctrine; we have an enormous customer in the Republics of South America. In 1900 we sent to the Continent of America £51,500,000 of the produce and manufactures of Great Britain. Of that amount £23,000,000 went to the Latin Republics, £20,000,000 to the United States, and £8,500,000 to the British Colonies. This enormous trade gives this country an overwhelming interest in the maintenance of the Monroe Doctrine, in the maintenance of the virtual *status quo* on the American Continent. The German interest is not the same, and to tie ourselves up in direct defiance of the precedent of Mexico seems to me to be a peculiarly dangerous and reckless act. Those on the Opposition side of the House who entertained doubts as to the policy of this action had ground to think that there was in the minds of some Members of the Government the idea of an alliance with Germany which had sometimes led to action a little like blacking the boots of Germany. There has been a continual harking back to the idea of a German alliance, a continual hankering after it. Between the July proposal as to joint action with Germany and November 11 and the tying up of our interests with those of Germany, occurred the most unfriendly action of Germany towards this country at Shanghai. I should like to know whether there is any truth in the very direct statements of *The Times* correspondent in China on this subject. The correspondent of *The Times* has frequently informed the country, and there has been no contradiction of the statement, that Germany presented a secret Memorandum to the Chinese Government as to the date on which they would leave Shanghai and withdraw the German troops. This was done behind the backs of our Government, and at the moment when the Venezuelan operations were in contemplation.

The other one of the two subjects which I should like to ask certain questions about is one which has been affected and changed since the Leader of the Opposition put his question to the Government at the beginning of this debate—I refer to the Kano expedition. The position has been affected by the issue of a most extraordinary Paper, which has not yet been circulated to hon. Members, but to which, by the kindness of the Government, my attention was called before we separated this afternoon. The Kano expedition has led to a most painful censure upon a very distinguished officer, namely, the

Commissioner of Nigeria, in words which are very strong. What the House ought to be quite clear about is that that censure is deserved by the Commissioner and not by the Government, and I will just ask my question in order to put hon. Members in possession of the special points of the case. Our suspicions as to the intention of an attack on Kano were first aroused by the proceedings of some distinguished clerics, who, in the course of an interview, stated that Kano "must be dealt with." This statement was telegraphed all over the world, and the phrase even occurs in the Lugard despatches. In the belief of the Government the preparations for the expedition to Kano were for an escort to accompany the Anglo-French Commission for the delimitation of the frontier. Before the date at which the Government changed their minds on the subject and addressed remonstrances to the Commissioner in Nigeria, it was known in France that the delimitation of the frontier would have to be postponed on account of the British expedition to Kano. The arrangement of the despatches in the White Paper is a little confusing, but the first telegram is dated 10th December, the day after the Question was put in the House, to which the Leader of the Opposition has referred. That telegram begins:—

> "Reuter states that it has been decided to undertake hostile operations against Kano, but I presume that you are only taking necessary precautions for safety of Boundary Commissioners."

That suggests that the Questions put in this House were only put upon the basis of that Reuter telegram, but it is not the case at all. The information which was in my possession, and in the possession of my hon. friend the Member for Oldham, the hon. Member for Manchester, and several Lancashire hon. Members, was of two descriptions. We had information from commercial houses in Liverpool and Manchester who knew of this expedition, and also from officers who had been recalled to service for the purposes of this expedition. It was upon that information that we put our Questions. The Government telegraphed five times before they got any answer to their telegrams, and at last they sent a very emphatic telegram on December 24th, which will be found on page 3 of the correspondence relating to Kano. The telegram states:—

> "Referring to my telegrams of 19th December and 22nd December, His Majesty's Government must have information asked for before any expedition starts for Kano."

The first telegram, which clearly replies to those five telegrams, is one of a most unsatisfactory kind. The High Commissioner states that reports have been spread throughout the Protectorate concerning the movement of troops, and he seems to think that that is a good reason for an expedition. He added:—

> "I must dispose of Kano before withdrawing troops. I cannot send adequate escort Boundary Commissioners until threat of Kano is removed."

On January 2nd the Government asked a question which, in my opinion, it ought to have asked long before. It was alleged in Liverpool, in the Press, and in that House that the difficulty with the Emir not only of Kano, but of Sokoto, had arisen through the suspension of the payment of the annual money grant which had been given by the Niger Company. The Earl of Onslow, on January 2nd, wrote to the High Commissioner stating that he should be glad to receive from him a despatch explaining generally the action he had taken with regard to the subsidies formerly paid by the Niger Company, and detailing more especially the circumstances in which he decided to suspend the subsidy to the Sultan of Sokoto. There is no answer to the Earl of Onslow's despatch, and we are left, therefore, in unhappy doubt as to the justice and the origin of this campaign. Now we come to the actual terms of the censure on the High Commissioner. The High Commissioner sent a long and somewhat indignant despatch stating that on previous occasions he had given information which clearly showed that he intended that an expedition should be sent to Kano, and he refers to four despatches from which he says the Government ought to have clearly understood his view. He gives another reason, and says:—

> "It is now the universal belief among the native chiefs that an immediate advance on Kano is intended."

He further states that:—

> "Events have, therefore, been precipitated by the action of those opposed to us. I had hoped that this crisis might have been postponed till late in January."

Having stated his case, he was afterwards censured by the Government. In a despatch dated January 28th, the Earl of Onslow, writing to the High Commissioner, says—

> "There was nothing to indicate that you were then contemplating an expedition against Kano, but it was understood, and I think rightly, that your military preparations would be confined to taking such measures as might be necessary to ensure the safety of the Boundary Commissioners, and to guard against the possibility of hostile action on the part of the rulers of Sokoto or Kano. It was, however, evident that, in consequence of the extension of the area of effective occupation to the westward as far as Bornu, it was desirable to increase the military force in Northern Nigeria, and you were informed by telegram of 20th December that His Majesty's Government were prepared to approve of your raising in 1903-4 a third battalion, 1,000 strong, in addition to the 400 mounted infantry and 500 civil police proposed by you in your despatch of the 28th August."

It is an extraordinary fact, but that battalion and the whole of that force is paid for out of the Civil Service Estimates, and is not under the War Office, and does not come under the military expenditure of this country. Now we come to the actual terms of the censure :—

> "His Majesty's Government regret the necessity which has arisen for taking action against Kano. They think that you should have kept them more fully informed of what was passing, and that you should have given them an earlier opportunity of considering, with the knowledge which they alone possess of the general situation in other parts of the Empire, whether it was necessary to send an expedition to Kano, and whether it was expedient to do so at this time and with the force which is available."

That is the censure with which the despatch concludes. I remember that when General Lugard was attacked for his operations in Uganda, many of us sided with him, I am not quite sure, after reading the Papers, as to whether the censure upon Sir F. Lugard is thoroughly deserved, and I am doubtful whether we ought not to censure the Government for not having kept their eyes open to what was going on, and to what had been going on ever since that interview with Bishop Tugwell, and to the preparations with which many hon. Members were acquainted, which were known to every one in Liverpool and Manchester, and of which the Government alone seem to have been ignorant.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): I hope the House will excuse me if I reply now to what has been said upon this question. I think the speech which the right hon. Baronet has just made ought to receive an answer at once with regard to the question of Kano. I must frankly admit, as my right hon. friend admitted upon an earlier occasion in the course of this debate, that when I answered the right hon. Baronet just at the close of the Autumn session of Parliament, I used language in reply to a supplementary Question, of which I had no notice, which I would not have used if I had been in possession of the information which came into the hands of the Government a few days later.

The right hon. Baronet has spoken of the reports and rumours which were current in different circles at that time, and which he thought ought to have been a warning to the Government as to what was proceeding. But reports and rumours are very rife in Africa. They are often very untrustworthy, and I do not think it would be safe to answer questions basing one's answer on such rumours as might be rife. The right hon. Baronet cited the declaration of Bishop Tugwell; but that was not binding either on the High Commissioner or on the Government. I have not risen to explain my previous answer or to expand the statement of the

Prime Minister, but because the right hon. Baronet has spoken several times of the censure inflicted on Sir F. Lugard, the High Commissioner of Northern Nigeria, and the right hon. Baronet on the first occasion alluded to "the very grave and severe censure." I think if hon. Members have not read the Papers they will be altogether misled by the adjective the right hon. Baronet has used in his description of the view taken of Sir F. Lugard's conduct by the Government. That which the right hon. Gentleman describes as censure is an expression of regret in Lord Onslow's despatch of January 28. The right hon. Baronet quoted the words. The Government regretted that Sir F. Lugard had not informed them earlier as to the circumstances that were present to his mind, which the Government could only know through him, and which led him to consider the expedition justifiable and necessary. When the Government obtained the information they asked for, they agreed in the view taken by Sir F. Lugard. We have absolute confidence in his proved judgment and great experience; and I am confident the right hon. Baronet will be the last man to accuse this distinguished African administrator of such wide experience, and who has rendered such great service to this country, of rashness—of any unnecessary provocative action in the protection of the interests committed to his care.

What are the circumstances which led Sir Frederick Lugard to consider this expedition necessary? Ever since the Anglo-French agreement for the settlement of the disputed boundary question on the West Coast, the Government have been under agreement with the French Government to send a Joint Commission for the delimitation of the frontier, the general lines of which were already settled. That Joint Commission ought to have started, and it was intended that it should start, at once; but it was delayed, at our request, because the Government were not in a position to give the necessary protection to it during its work. The Government would have been glad not to have been obliged to have brought their relations with Kano to the present stage; they would have been glad to have waited longer in hope of a friendly solution of difficulties. But it is undesirable to have an indefinite frontier between the possessions of two great European Powers in Africa, because that position is very apt to lead to friction and unfortunate incidents, the results of which may be very serious and very much to be regretted by both of the great countries concerned. It has been necessary for the French to pass through our territory to their own, and there are circumstances that make the delimitation of the boundary necessary. The Boundary Commission had to pass behind the territory of the Emir of Kano and that of the Sultan of Sokoto, and it had to be protected during the time it passed, and had to be revictualled through Kano in the course of its operations. Sir Frederick Lugard had to make provision for these operations, and while considering these, the Emir of Kano, so far from showing any disposition to become more friendly, was making preparation for an attack upon our post at Zaria, and, on 13th December, Sir F. Lugard telegraphed—

> "Information received that Kano preparations completed for provoking war, demonstration in favour of murderer of Moloney. Safety of garrison of Zaria, prestige of British Government, possibility of delimitation of frontier depend on energetic action."

The murderer of Moloney, a British officer, was protected by the Emir of

Kano. I think that telegram discloses very grave and sufficient reasons for the action Sir F. Lugard thought it necessary to take, and which the Government have sanctioned.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: The Government did not say so, for on 1st January they said that the expedition was not to take place.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir; they did not say that it was not to take place, but they said it was not to take place until they sanctioned it. The right hon. Baronet would have been the first to criticise us if we had not acted. The right hon. Baronet said it was stated in a French paper that the Anglo-French Boundary Commission had been postponed on account of our military operations. It was not postponed on account of the military operations, but it could not be undertaken until the military operations had been brought to a successful conclusion. The right hon. Baronet said he was in grave doubt even now as to the justice of our action, and suggested that all the trouble with the Emir of Kano arose from the British Administration having failed to pay a subsidy, or subsidies, which had been paid, or were payable, by the Niger Company when it was the governing and administrating authority in that territory. There never was any such subsidy, either paid or payable, to the Emir of Kano; and, whatever questions may arise about subsidies, they do not affect our relations with Kano, and cannot be an excuse for his hostile preparations against the British Administration, or his treatment of the representations sent to him by Sir F. Lugard. The Emir of Kano has, unfortunately, shown himself persistently hostile to the British Administration; but I am glad to say that the anticipations which Sir F. Lugard has formed, that the great mass of the people would regard us as deliverers rather than as conquerors, appear to have been justified by the results. The Haussa population and the merchants appear to have welcomed our occupation of the capital as bringing with it security and freedom of trade, and an assurance that slave-raiding and the tribute of slaves that has been paid by Kano would no longer continue.

The only subsidy agreement with which the Government were concerned was an agreement to pay a subsidy to the Sultan of Sokoto. As to that, the Government are not in possession of full information, and we have asked Sir F. Lugard to supply the facts and give a full account of the circumstances. The Sultan of Sokoto did receive a subsidy from the Niger Company. There is reason to think that the Niger Company had already decided that they would not continue to pay that subsidy any longer to the Sultan of Sokoto when their administration ceased and passed to the British Government. We have reason to think that the Company had taken that decision on the ground of the very unsatisfactory nature of their relations with the Sultan of Sokoto. Sir F. Lugard, when the Niger Company's administration was taken over, sent a messenger to the Sultan of Sokoto to inform him of the transfer; but the Sultan of Sokoto refused to recognise the transfer in any form, and has treated all the attempts of Sir F. Lugard to open friendly relations with contumely and contempt. I do not think the right hon. Baronet would contend that in such circumstances it would be desirable that we should pay the Sultan of Sokoto a subsidy, even if there had been good ground for such a payment. However that may be, as I have stated, the Government's information on that subject is not complete' but that cannot affect our operations at Kano or our relations with the Emir of Kano. The right hon. Baronet would make a great mistake if he supposed that the Government had in any way lost confidence in Sir F. Lugard, or if he attached a graver meaning to the expression of regret that the Government were not earlier informed of the facts that were within his knowledge, than the very simple words in which that expression of regret was couched would warrant. We retain full confidence in that most experienced administrator, and we are quite certain that he will act with all forbearance and with great discretion in dealing with the circumstances which arise in the great area under his control.

*MR. TOMKINSON (Cheshire, Crewe): I desire to say a word in regard to the Sugar Convention. The debate last session was confined to a single sitting, and that, I consider, was far too short a time for the discusson of so important a subject. It will be remembered that the Colonial Secretary spoke at considerable length, and had the last word on the subject. I remember that two of his chief arguments in favour of the Convention were, firstly, that the country was pledged to it in honour by reason of its agreement with foreign countries, and that to withdraw from it would be to incur the charge of *mala fides;* and secondly, that very great injury had been done to the sugar refining industry of this country, and that that industry might have been an extremely large and flourishing one but for the bounties paid by foreign countries. What is the real case of the sugar refiners? It is, forsooth, that the interests of 40,000,000 of consumers, and perhaps hundreds of thousands of hands engaged in various industries, are to be imperilled and set aside by the Convention lately entered into, a Convention on which the country has not had a word to say, on which it had not a word of warning beforehand, and about which no word was said at the General Election. The people of the country are committed to it without having a word to say in the matter. Well, now, what is the case of the sugar-refining industry? The fact is, that, so far from having been crushed out and destroyed by the sugar bounties, it is, I believe, well known that it had already begun to be a declining and diminishing industry before these bounties were paid at all. It is a fact that a very large diminution in the number of sugar refineries in the country had taken place before the sugar bounties came into force. I think they had diminished 50 per cent. before the introduction of the bounties. The fact is that sugar refining is now very largely and more profitably carried on on the spot where the sugar is grown, and that the greater portion of the sugar imported into this country comes into it in a more or less refined condition. Therefore it is a mistake to say that the great decline in the sugar-refining industry is the direct consequence of the sugar bounties.

We have become more or less accustomed to strange departures on the part of His Majesty's Government. We have seen our system of absolutely free imports of food broken down, and a tax placed upon the bread of this country, which, however small it may be said to be, nevertheless does amount to a bonus of 4s. or 5s. per acre of wheat grown in this country. A tax on wheat of 1s. 1d. per quarter means a 4s. or 5s. bounty or bonus on every acre of wheat in this country. If that tax had been proposed in that form instead of a duty of 3d. per cwt., I wonder what the people of this country would have said of it. In this case the proposal of the Government to do away with sugar bounties is one of the strangest and most indefensible of the strange things which this Government have done. It is a fact, no doubt, that protective duties do injure our trade with foreign countries in manufactured articles, but, after all, the great rivals who impose these tariffs—France, Germany, and America—are our best customers, and take more of our manufactured goods than any other countries in the world. Then take the comparative values of the imports of sugar from the West Indies and those from other sugar-producing countries. I believe that of every 100 lb. of sugar that come into this country only 2½ lbs. come from the West Indies, and those colonies are already in the most favoured position in regard to five-sixths of their total exports. They have in the United States a country in which they have a free market, and which already places a countervailing duty on bounty-fed sugar. As my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition has said, it is doubtful whether we shall not be doing the West Indies considerably more harm than good by putting an end to the bounties. And, worst of all, as has been said, we are placing our fiscal arrangements for the first time in the hands of a foreign council. Last, not least, we may be incurring the greatest difficulties with our own colonies, for we may be brought by this very convention under obligation of closing our ports against the import of sugar from Queensland and other colonies of the Empire. On all these grounds I think that we on this side of the House ought to give the strongest possible protest we can against the ratification of the treaty.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.) then moved the adjournment of the debate.

MR. STEVENSON asked whether the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs had any statement to make regarding the Macedonian question.

LORD CRANBORNE: I should be sorry if the hon. Member thought I had been discourteous towards him in not rising to answer him, but as the debate proceeded it diverged from the affairs of the office with which I am connected. I think the hon. Gentleman will recognise that this is not a particularly appropriate moment to discuss the Macedonian question; but, if he wishes to take further opportunity of raising the subject, I will do my best to give him an answer.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Dr. Macnamara*).

Put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed Tomorrow.

Adjourned at ten minutes after Eleven o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 18*th February*, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND).

Petitions for legislation: from Banff; Ordiquhill; and, Rothiemay; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petitions for prohibition: from Rugby; and Basingstoke; to lie upon the Table.

VARATHANWNTHAJEE, RY VIJAGA, SAHIB.

Petition of Ry Vijaga Varathanwnthajee, Sahib, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES (ELECTORS, ETC.) (UNITED KINGDOM).

Address for "Return showing, with regard to each Parliamentary Constituency in the United Kingdom, the total number and, as far as possible, the number in each class of electors on the register now in force, and also showing the population and inhabited houses in each constituency (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 70, of Session 1902)."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the urban district of Whitley and Monkseaton in the county of Northumberland (North Shields, Tynemouth, and District Light Railways (Extension) Order, 1902) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the county of Gloucester, in the borough of Cheltenham, and in the urban district of Charlton Kings (Cheltenham and District Light Railway (Extensions No. 2) Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the county of Wilts, from Amesbury to Bulford (Amesbury and Military Camp Light Railway (Bulford Extension) Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the county of Cornwall, from Padstow to Tregurrian, in the parish of St. Mawgan (Padstow, Bedruthan, and Mawgan Light Railway Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the municipal borough of Poole and the urban district of Branksome, in the county of Dorset (Poole and District Light Railway (Extension) Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the county of Essex, in the urban districts of Walthamstow, Leyton, and Chingford (Walthamstow and District Light Railway Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MILITIA ACT, 1882 (DEPUTY LIEUTENANTS, IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return of descriptions of qualifications of Deputy Lieutenants lodged during 1902, as furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Amended General Regulations made by the Local Government Board for Ireland, dated 9th February, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND).

Copies presented, of two General Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland, dated 13th May, 1902, and 17th December, 1902, respectively [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Copy presented, of Report by the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords and the Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, that they are of opinion that the Fife Electric Power Company Order, the Hamilton, Motherwell, and Wishaw Tramways Order, the Life Association of Scotland Order, the Scottish American Mortgage Company, Limited, Order, the Lanarkshire and Dumbartonshire Railway Order, and the Glasgow Corporation (Police) Order ought to be dealt with by Private Bill and not by Provisional Order [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 16.]

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 AND 1896.

Copies presented, of Five Orders, numbered respectively 6594, 6608, 6612, 6615, and 6616, relating to the Landing of Foreign Animals in Great Britain [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House:—

PUBLIC RECORDS (WAR OFFICE).

Copy of Seventh Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents existing or accruing in the Office of His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the War Department which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act].

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Charles Curtis Craig, esquire, for the County of Antrim (South Antrim Division).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Postmen in the E. C. District—Delay in the Supply of Uniforms—Compensation for wear and tear of private clothes.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch Hoxton): To ask the Postmaster General whether he will explain why a number of postmen employed in the E. C. District Office have been only recently supplied with their uniforms after a delay of from one to six months, during which time they served the Department wearing their private clothes; and whether it is his intention to compensate these men for the loss of an emolument recognised by the Department.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I am making inquiry into the matter to which the hon. Member refers, and will let him know the result.

Report of Forestry Committee Opportunity for Discussion.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if it is intended to take any steps to carry out the Report of the Departmental Committee on Forestry before the House of Commons has the opportunity of expressing an opinion as to the suitability of the centres recommended.

(*Answered by Mr. Hanbury.*) The evidence has not yet been printed, and I am, therefore, not in a position to decide as to the urgency of any particular recommendation. But I will, of course, take care that the right hon. Baronet, or others interested, have a proper opportunity of expressing their views.

Processions of Unemployed—Obstruction to Shopkeepers.

*COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the interference with business caused to shopkeepers in London by the recent daily processions of unemployed through the streets for the purpose of collecting money; and whether it is proposed to take any steps in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) I have received representations to the effect indicated, and I have given anxious attention to these and all other considerations affecting the question. I have been in constant consultation with the Commissioner of Police, who has been acting, with my approval, to the full extent, as I am advised, of his powers. One of his chief objects has been to minimise the hindrance to traffic caused by the processions; and I believe that as much has been done to prevent undue inconvenience to the public as is possible in the existing state of the law. Whether the law should be altered and additional powers be given to the police is a matter for serious consideration; and I hope that the Royal Commission on London Traffic may throw light upon the subject, which is one of considerable difficulty.

Vivisection Return—Date of Publication.

DR. SHIPMAN (Northampton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state when the Returns of Experiments on Living Animals for the year 1902 will be produced.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) The Returns from licensed persons are now being collected; and every effort will be made to get them in, and to produce the Paper without delay. But I cannot at present give a definite date for its publication.

Alien Immigration Commission—Report.

MR. FORDE RIDLEY (Bethnal Green, S.W.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can now inform the House whether the Royal Commission on Pauper Alien Immigration is likely to report in time to allow of legislation being introduced this session.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I am unable to say when the Royal Commission is likely to make its Report. The Board of Trade have no control over the proceedings of the Commission.

Royal Engineers—Promotion of Officers.

MAJOR EVANS-GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the rate of promotion for officers in the corps of Royal Engineers; whether he is aware that by the Gradation List of January last it appears that senior majors, captains and lieutenants, and second lieutenants in the Engineers are passed over respectively by 100, 120, 700, and 1,600 officers originally their juniors; and whether, seeing that in a mixed force of different arms a Royal Engineer officer who might be the best fitted to command would have to act under an officer of less service, it is proposed to take steps similar to those taken in the Indian Army to deal with this state of affairs.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The question of the promotion of the captains and lieutenants of Royal Engineers has already received my attention. Owing to the war and other causes promotion has been greatly accelerated in other branches of the service, somewhat to the effect stated in the Question, but it must be borne in mind that these causes are abnormal, and reactionary effect may be expected. The matter will, however, be again considered when matters regarding promotion are in a more normal condition.

South African War Medals—Reasons for awarding to Kaffirs.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War how many medals have been placed at the disposal of the Commander of the Forces in South Africa for presentation to Kaffirs for active service in the late war; and whether, having regard to the assurances of the War Office authorities that natives took no part in the war, what were the nature of the services rendered by the Kaffirs to whom war medals have been awarded.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) Non-enlisted men who drew pay from military funds were, under the terms of Army Order 94 of 1901, allowed to receive bronze medals, and a supply of 100,000 medals was despatched at Lord Kitchener's request to South Africa. A large number of Kaffirs were employed with the administrative services. Instructions have been given to avoid a wholesale issue of such medals.

BALLOT FOR BILLS AND MOTIONS.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): In moving the Resolution which stands in my name on the Paper I do not think any words of explanation are required from me. The new Rule provides two nights in the week on which private Members' Bills may be taken, and I will only remind hon. Members that, in bringing in their Bills, it is not necessary for them now to advance from the bar of the House. A great deal of time may be saved if the new procedure is adopted.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

That no Bills, other than Government Bills, be introduced in anticipation of the ballot, and that all Members who desire to ballot, whether for Bills or for Motions, for Tuesday, 24th February, and Tuesday, 3rd March, and Wednesday, 25th February, and Wednesday 4th March, do hand in their names at the Table during the sitting of the House on the first or second day of the session, and that a copy of such notices be handed in at the latest during the sitting of the House on the third day of the session.

That the ballot for the precedence of the said Bills and Motions be taken on the third day on which the House sits, at a convenient time and place to be appointed by Mr. Speaker, and that the presentation of Bills on the fourth sitting day be taken as soon after twelve o'clock as Mr. Speaker may deem convenient. (*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) said the House was taking a new departure. Three or four years ago he made some remarks on a similar Motion, showing that though the arrangements for balloting, etc., at the beginning of the year were rather complicated, yet the result at the end of the session was very poor, so far as the number of private Members' Bills receiving the Royal Assent was concerned. How far the alterations would effect an improvement in that respect remained to be seen. They had in the past too often seen the Leader of the House — who should be the conservator and guardian of Standing Orders, moving the suspension of them, and——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That hardly arises on this Motion, which only deals with the method of taking the ballot.

MR. ELLIS said that on the 8th February, 1899,[†] he raised the question on a similar Motion, but, of course, after the intimation from the Chairman he would not pursue the matter further. He would only express his hope that at the end of the session they would find that the new procedure had helped unofficial Members interested in Private Bills in securing fruition for their eagerness and anxiety to see a certain amount of legislation passed every year irrespective of that initiated by the Government.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) referred to the inconvenience caused on the previous day by crowds of Members flocking to the Table in order to sign the Notice Paper. Last year Mr. Speaker expressed an opinion that some arrangements should be made to obviate such proceedings by having the work done in a Committee Room, and he would ask the Prime Minister if steps could not be taken to ensure that being done. He trusted that on future occasions their proceedings would not thus be interrupted.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I may remind the right hon. Gentleman that these arrangements rest with the Speaker, who, I understand, has provided that in future such things as the right hon. Gentleman complains of shall be avoided. With regard to the dates mentioned in the Motion, I have not the smallest hope that the debate on the Address will be concluded by the 24th inst., and it may, therefore, be necessary to bring forward a Motion giving the Government the whole of the time of the House until the debate is concluded.

[†] See (4) *Debates*, lxvi. 181.

Question put, and agreed to.

BALLOT FOR BILLS AND MOTIONS.

Ordered, That no Bills, other than Government Bills, be introduced in anticipation of the ballot, and that all Members who desire to ballot, whether for Bills or for Motions, for Tuesday, 24th February, and Tuesday, 3rd March, and Wednesday, 25th February, and Wednesday, 4th March, do hand in their names at the Table during the sitting of the House on the first or second day of the session, and that a copy of such notices be handed in, at the latest, during the sitting of the House on the third day of the session. That the ballot for the precedence of the said Bills and Motions be taken on the third day on which the House sits, at a convenient time and place, to be appointed by Mr. Speaker, and that the presentation of Bills on the fourth sitting day be taken as soon after twelve o'clock as Mr. Speaker may deem convenient.—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

MR. SPEAKER said that the ballot for the precedence of Bills and Motions would be taken in Committee Room 10, at twelve o'clock tomorrow, and that the presentation of the Bills in the House would take place immediately before the Orders of the Day on Friday next.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.)

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Question again proposed. — Debate resumed.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): It is with profound disappointment I view the fact that there is no promise made in the King's Speech of any intention to attempt to deal this session with the appalling problem of the housing of the working classes. I never have dealt, and do not propose now to deal, with this question in a partisan spirit. I do not forget that twenty years ago the Prime Minister—then a private Member—moved a Resolution which led to the appointment of a Royal Commission in whose deliberations the King took part, neither do I forget that the late Prime Minister brought a similar motion before the House of Lords, which also helped in the setting up of the Royal Commission. But I do want to say this, that in my opinion the present Administration has lost a golden opportunity of dealing with this problem. It has been in office for seven years; it has had unparalleled power in both Houses of Parliament, and certainly it might, without proposing any great heroic measure, have, year by year and step by step, done something to mitigate the evils arising from the lack of proper housing accommodation. I go back to the General Election of 1895. There was no war issue before the people at that time, and the present Administration unquestionably secured office by their bold and comprehensive scheme of social reform. What has resulted from that programme? In 1899 the Colonial Secretary took over a private Member's Bill to enable local authorities to lend money to working people with which to buy their own houses. No doubt the Government expected a great deal from that measure, for on the Motion for the Third Reading on 4th July, 1899†, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham said—

> "I do not like to be optimistic so I will content myself by saying that here is a Bill which carries out one of the most important pledges the Unionist Party gave at the General Election. We believe that it will be successful and that it will be a great advantage to the working-class population."

But what has been the result? After four years administration we were told by the President of the Local Government Board in the fall of last year that of all the millions of people in England

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† See (4) *Debates*, lxxiii, 1478.

and Wales there had been the microscopic number of forty-four individual loans under the Act. There had been one application in London from the Hammersmith County Council, but it was of such a character that the authority did not think it would be legal to acquiesce in it, and the individual eventually got his loan through a private agency. That is the sole result of the measure from which such big things were expected. But that is not all. In 1900 the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford passed a Bill through the House enabling municipalities to purchase land outside their own areas for the purposes of housing. There has not been much result from that Act. The London County Council have undoubtedly taken up two great schemes by means of its agency, but I am very doubtful indeed whether the Government can show any substantial participation in the great privileges which were to spring from it, in any part of the country except London. I have made careful inquiry and I cannot find that that Act has been anything more than rather barren of results. It should have been accompanied by provisions for the cheap and effective transit of the people from their places of occupation to the new municipal dwellings which were to be set up five, ten, or even fifteen miles away. And that exhausts the record of their harvest of five years of unparalleled power.

Then came the General Election of 1900. That was obscured by the war issue. But it is remarkable, even under these circumstances, the extent to which the housing of the working classes was made a prominent question in the election speeches and addresses of Members of all parties at that time; and there are now forty Members on the other side of the House who not only made it a matter of speechifying, but put into their election addresses a specific promise that they would treat it as an urgent and pressing question. No doubt, when we come to a division, we shall find them giving effect to that pledge. In January, 1901, the then Home Secretary, now the Chancellor of the Exchequer, received a deputation of temperance reformers asking him to bring forward temperance legislation. To that the right hon. Gentleman gave an extremely commonsense reply. He said that many things might be done, apart from direct temperance legislation, which would do more for temperance than direct licensing reform. The right hon. Gentleman added—

> "They wanted more comfort for the people in their own houses; and those of them who knew something about the squalid character of the houses in which large masses of our people dwelt, could not wonder if the comfort which they could not get in their squalid dwellings, they endeavoured to find elsewhere in brighter surroundings. He believed the public conscience was aroused to a degree never before reached by this question of the housing of our people, and, to his mind, it was of immensely more importance that this evil should be remedied than even that the number of public house licences should be reduced."

I remember the President of the Local Government Board received a deputation from the Workmen's National Housing Council in February, 1901, urging housing reform, and at the very outset of his reply the right hon. Gentleman made this statement—

> "I admit that the question of the housing of the working classes is more pressing and more important than most of the social problems with which we are confronted."

That was two years ago, and I should like to know what has since been done to carry out the pledges which that statement seems to imply.

Certainly the whole of the session of 1901 was absolutely barren, and nothing was done in that year with regard to this problem. What about 1902? There was no promise in the King's Speech of any endeavour to deal with the matter, and I therefore ventured to move an Amendment, with the result, in the first place, that the Select Committee which had been appointed the year before, but had not been called together, was immediately summoned; and, in the second place, an independent Joint Committee of both Houses was appointed. I very well remember that the impression left on my mind at that time was that it was the sincere and honest purpose of the Government to deal promptly with the recommendations of those two Select Committees when they came into their hands. The first Select Committee dealt with the advisability of extending the period for the repayment of housing loans contracted by municipal authorities. The present limit is sixty years, and there was a general agreement that it might be extended to eighty. The Member for South Islington, indeed moved in the Select Committee that it should be 100 years, and he was only beaten by eight votes to six. Still, as I said, there was a general agreement that the term might be made eighty years, as such an extension of the period of repayment would enable local authorities by a few pence per week to reduce the rents they are compelled to charge for these tenements. I desire to know why we cannot this session have legislation to carry out that recommendation. There were other matters in the Report of the Committee to which I am referring, but they were of an administrative character, and I am prepared to hear from the President of the Local Government Board that they are receiving the close attention of, and will be dealt with, by his Department. The Second Select Committee was a Joint Committee of both Houses, and of it I had the honour to be a member. It was called together to consider whether the Standing Orders of this House incorporated in Model Clauses, in Railway Bills and Provisional Orders imposing rehousing obligations on companies and authorities, might not be stiffened and rendered less easy of evasion. The evidence showed that there had been evasions, and we therefore proposed a series of clauses making them less possible. Why cannot we this year have the Orders of this House stiffened, if necessary by legislation on the lines suggested by this Select Committee? These are two extremely moderate requests, but even if granted they would barely touch the fringe of this question of the housing of the working classes.

There are many more things which require to be done, and to be done promptly. We want a drastic reform of the Land Laws. I cannot ask the Government to undertake that this session. I wish it success in its endeavour to solve the Irish land problem, and I hope that, when it has done that, we may be able to apply certain precedents thus created to other parts of the United Kingdom. But this question of the land, and of urban land in particular, on account of the enormous cost of it, is the main obstacle in the way of municipal housing in great cities. Take the familiar case of the Boundary Street area. It was an area described as filthy and verminous. This was the official description of it given by the London County Council—

> "In a majority of instances the houses were so constructed that the ground floors were from twelve to eighteen inches below the street level. No house possessed such a thing as a front door, no repairs were ever done, what backyards there ever were had been covered in to make new tenements, and thus we have a bare idea of the state of things which caused the death rate in that particular neighbourhood to mount up to over forty per 1000 in 1889, although at the same time the death rate at Hampstead was only thirteen per 1000 and at St. George's, Hanover Square, fifteen per 1000."

I remember the First Lord said on that occasion that if every slum owner was hung on his own door lintel he would not shed many tears over them. But nothing of that kind happened to these slum owners. Instead of that they got £333,000 from the London County Council, or £300 for every family that was about to be rehoused by the County Council, merely for clearing the property. I confess I have never been able to understand why the municipal authorities should be compelled at once to repay the loan for the land. The land is not likely to diminish in value, and why should not the payment for it be allowed to stand over until the cost of the building has been paid off. That, at any rate, would mitigate the rent which has at present to be fixed so high as to make the new tenements prohibitive for the very class of people for whom they are intended. I have another proposition not of a very drastic character. I do not know why local authorities should not be permitted to borrow cheap money for the purposes of this Act. Why cannot they borrow at 2½ per cent.? The Treasury could make up the difference between that and the current rate of interest. Still, as that may be deemed to be a big order I will not press it on the Government.

I think the Board of Trade does not do its duty in compelling the great railway companies to carry out the obligations into which they entered under the Act of 1883. They then obtained a remission of the Passenger Duty, and I know that the companies having termini in London have received many millions of money in order that they should run a sufficient number of workmen's trains. Now the greatest diversity is permitted by the Board of Trade in regard to that Cheap Trains Act. The Great Eastern Railway runs over 100 workmen's trains into its London terminus daily, whereas the Midland only runs five a day, and one result of the diversity of practice is that you create a new housing problem along the line which runs the greatest number of trains. Again, diversity obtains with regard to the cost of workmen's tickets. The Great Eastern take a man ten miles each way daily for a charge of 1s. per week: for a like distance on the Great Western the charge is 4s. weekly, a big sum if you add it to the rent which a man has to pay out of his small wages. I think the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade should brisk up the companies and make them carry out their obligations. I am convinced that we want a new Cheap Trains Act altogether. The present Act is twenty years old. Today hundreds of thousands of young people, especially girls, come into London to work. They do not commence their duties till 9 or 9.30, but if they desire to take advantage of the cheap train service they have to reach St. Pancras by twelve minutes past seven in the morning, or Liverpool Street before eight o'clock. That means early rising on their part, and then hanging about the railway stations until they can go to work. So grave is this scandal that a number of clergymen in the neighbourhood of St. Pancras have opened their churches in order to provide these unhappy people with warm shelter during the time they are compelled to hang about. We want, then, a Cheap Trains Act brought up-to-date. I daresay the answer will be that the railway companies cannot do more than they are doing now. My rejoinder to that is that they should be as enterprising as they possibly can in meeting the needs of the working classes; otherwise they will be left high and dry by the electrification of municipal tramways, and by the extension of all forms of locomotion by municipalities. It is to their own interest to give a more generous interpretation to the provisions of the Cheap Trains Act.

I have not said a single word about the precise nature of this problem, and I do not know that I need do so. Hon. Members must have often seen the census returns, which show the extent to which these unhappy people are compelled to live in overcrowded dwellings. They are of all ages and of all sexes, and very frequently eight, ten, and even twelve, have to live in one room. Do hon. Gentlemen think that chastity of thought and of action are possible under such circumstances? The returns of the Medical Officers of Health show in a most relentless way how disease and death, with the fiendish accompaniment of crime, mark this overcrowding, and some of us must be aware, from experience in our own constituencies, that drunkenness and immorality are equally concomitants of this deplorable evil of overcrowding. At a meeting at Bermondsey Town Hall recently the Rev. Henry Pitt, the Vicar of St. Mary's, Southwark, gave some startling figures with regard to over crowding in that parish. He stated that there were 9,896 tenements of only one room; while 12,480 consisted of only two rooms. Then he went on to point out that in each of two of the one room tenements ten persons lived; in one, nine; in one, eight; in each of ten, seven; in each of thirty-five, six; in each of 201, five; and in each of 727, four. In the parish of St. Mary's, in the old Kent Road, in one particular area there lived under these circumstances at the time 1,200 people, and it was pitiable to think of human beings thus herded together. Was it any wonder that with their starvation rate of wages, and with the exorbitant rents for miserable accommodation men and women were driven into the public-house? The rev. gentleman on that occasion made a significant statement. He said that the patience of the poor often surprised him, and that the absence of serious crime and disorder was most honourable to those whose social life was nothing less than slavery. The rev. gentleman spoke of this state of things as being a menace to our Imperial greatness. I say it is even more than that. It is a challenge to our claim to be considered a Christian community.

The Colonial Secretary recently made a speech at Kimberley, in which he referred, in very expansive tones, to the glories and privileges of our Empire. He said—

> "You are invited to share the privileges and glories of Empire. The Empire is a great and priceless possession which we cannot weigh in the balances. It is the greatest in extent that

the world has ever known before. What a heritage! You are co-heirs with us in its privileges and glories."

Now there are within a four-mile radius of this particular spot, in which we are assembled, tens of thousands, of our fellow citizens to whom this talk of the privileges, glories, and priceless possessions of Empire is a hideous mockery. I say this in no partisan spirit. They sit in a never-lifting shadow of misery and distress, and at the same time we sit in an Imperial fool's paradise, lulled into indifference by their stolid and uncomplaining patience. So long as these things remain as they are our Imperial greatness cannot be stable, and it will be the business of many of us, on this side of the House as well as on the other, to insist, unceasingly and unremittingly, on some effort being made to deal with this terrible problem, which is the canker of our Imperial well-being. It is on that ground that I move my Amendment.

*MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): I think the House owes a debt of gratitude to my hon. friend for bringing this important question forward. We are sorry that it should be necessary to move this Amendment to the Address. But it refers to a subject which, I think, may be fairly described as the most important social question of the day, and we are driven to take this step because the Government, in spite of the fact that they profess to have the subject deeply at heart, give no sign of taking any action to provide for some amelioration of this evil of over-crowding. In order to solve the problem it is necessary that we should have legislation of a far-reaching and drastic kind. My hon. friend has thrown out some hope that some measure may be produced based on the Reports of the two Committees which sat last year. But while I agree with him that we should be thankful for anything we can get, I am bound to say that if any political Party in this country is desirous of curing the evil it will not be able to do it by piece-meal legislation. We have been passing Acts of Parliament in connection with the subject for the last fifty years, and if any evidence is wanted of the inefficiency of those Acts, we have only to point to the present deplorable condition of the question. My hon. friend has given the House some figures, and it would be easy for anybody to produce the most harrowing accounts of the present state of affairs. Undoubtedly it is generally accepted by the country at large that this question is both urgent and pressing. Within the last two or three years we have had instalments of legislation intended to deal with this matter. One has been referred to by my hon. friend. It was the Act of Parliament passed purporting to give working men an opportunity of buying their dwellings. I know from the circumstances of my own constituency, where there is a peculiar desire for residences of this description, that this Act has not been of the slightest benefit whatsoever. There has not been one single application under it, because it is well known that it would be useless. Two years ago the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford, then President of the Local Government Board, passed through this House an Act which gave a local authority power to acquire land outside its own area. At that time we urged the necessity of extending the Cheap Trains Act, so that proper facilities might be provided for people to get to and from their dwellings. But that extension was denied to us, and consequently the Act has proved to be a dead letter.

I propose now in a few words to endeavour to put before the House what are the problems to be faced. I think I may say there are three of them. In the first place there is the great question of over-crowded areas in urban centres. An over-crowded area is necessarily an insanitary area, and I suppose that existing Acts of Parliament, if properly enforced, ought to be able to deal effectively with such areas. But they are not, and I will tell the House the reason for it. First there is the question of compensation to the owners of the insanitary areas. It should be a dangerous possession for a man to either hold or to be possessed of an insanitary area, but, in reality, the more insanitary it is the greater is the amount of compensation which he obtains. This is the first great block we have to deal with. We want to get rid of the over-crowded areas of this country, and I suggest that we must, by legislative means, impose upon the owners some sort of penalty or punishment so that they will be glad enough to get rid of them. At the present time, undoubtedly, an insanitary area comprises a sort of gilt edged security to those who understand how to deal with that sort of investment. Therefore we must give local authorities power to acquire these sites on such terms as will enable them to re-erect healthy homes which can be let at reasonable rents, or else impose upon the owner the responsibility of clearing his own site, and of replacing upon it houses that can be utilised by the present class of tenants. The only way to do that is to base the compensation on the value of the site when re-occupied by buildings suitable for the same class of people as lived on it before the clearance. Of course, this would involve legislation, and I think that my hon. friend is entitled to insist that it is the duty of the Government to provide a remedy for the evils to which he has called attention.

The next problem is of a rather different character. It is one involving the hoarding of land. Now, this is not merely a London question. It affects other great urban centres, and it applies to districts where there is land in abundance surrounding a town. I will take the case of the constituency which I represent—Devonport. There we have a splendid country surrounding the town. We have thousands of acres available, but, inasmuch as the land is in the possession, practically, of only one owner, he takes advantage of his monopoly to lease it out in retail quantities, and the result is that in that district you have the same hideous over-crowding as prevails in other great centres. The suggestion I would make, in order to compel the landlord to loose his land, is to see that it is taxed at its proper value. At the present moment, the land I am referring to is rated only on its agricultural value, yet the landlord has the power, when it comes into the market, to ask a capital price for it, representing many thousands of pounds per acre. This very landlord, when the Rating Act was passed, received the full benefit of the Act because the land, though actually building land, and worth as such many thousand pounds per acre, was let as agricultural land. Therefore, I say, not only has the overcrowding in the big cities to be dealt with, but also the system whereby men are allowed to hoard land and re-lease it in such quantities that an altogether fictitious value is obtained.

There is a third problem to which I refer, because of the Act passed two years ago giving local authorities power to acquire land outside their own borders. That power is no good at all unless facilities are placed in the hands of local authorities to secure cheap transport from the overcrowded areas to the rural districts. If the Government would only apply themselves to the extension of the Cheap Transport Act, 1883, that point might easily be dealt with.

Consider for a moment the penalty we as a nation pay for the toleration of this hideous evil. Two-thirds and more of our population is in the towns, and the percentage is increasing, and the death-rate rises in almost exact proportion to the amount of overcrowding, while infant mortality increases in an even greater ratio. Can it be beneficial to the interests of the country that every year we should be really killing off a large proportion of the population? Then there is the immorality, intemperance, disease, and lunacy—all largely due to overcrowding. If these things are not sufficient to awaken the Government on this question, goodness only knows what will stir them to action. Overcrowding is supposed by some to be the inevitable fate of the very poor and destitute. That really is not the case, as I know of hundreds of instances of honest, respectable, hard-working artisans who are compelled to live in these disgraceful surroundings and circumstances because there is no other accommodation available for them. This is a question that cannot be hung up. The Party opposite, individually and collectively, are pledged to do something. The country will not allow them to burk their responsibility. They may have plenty of legislation on hand, but this is one of the most pressing questions of the day, and it is amazing that no reference whatever should be made to it in the King's Speech. The Government have an unrivalled opportunity, and one such as the Liberals will probably never have. They hold the House of Lords in the hollow of their hand. When they come to deal with this question they will have to make inroads on vested interests, and if we were to attempt that our measure would probably fail to pass another place. The Government have not that impediment; they have everything in their favour, and if they sincerely wish to remedy this evil they ought to take advantage of their opportunity. If they fail to deal with the question we should be justified in saying that it is because they fear those vested interests, and that rather than impinge upon them they prefer to tolerate this awful loss of life and health. The real object of the Amendment is to afford the Government the earliest opportunity of stating clearly and frankly where they stand on this most important question. I beg to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question to add the words, 'And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the greatest hardships are inflicted upon many of your working-class subjects by reason of the lack of proper housing accommodation, and that immediate Parliamentary attention to this evil is one of the most pressing of the necessities of domestic policy.'"—(*Dr. Macnamara.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I think we have reason to complain of the Government in respect of this housing question, in regard not only to the lack of promise of legislation, but also to the administration of the existing law. The Local Government Board does not appear to act sympathetically towards the local authorities or other parties concerned, nor is the experience gained in one quarter utilised in another. Above all, the Government does not seem to realise that the first business in the matter of housing, especially in London, is to ascertain the deficiency of housing accommodation. To get that information no fresh legislation is necessary; it simply requires the existing machinery to be put in motion, either from Whitehall or through the local authorities. Those of us who are doing what we can through private enterprise to meet this great deficiency of accommodation find ourselves bound hand and foot by all sorts of regulations; if we go to the local authority we get the invariable reply that they are equally bound by more or less obsolete regulations; while we are told by the Local Government Board that they have no power to interfere with the local authorities so long as they conform to certain rules. The Government, however, appears to have realised in some measure that the building regulations have a very great bearing on the activities of private individuals, because recently a Departmental Committee has been examining into the question. But if the deliberations and decisions of the Joint Committees to which reference has been made are any criterion, I fear we cannot hope for much practical result from these Committees, so far as the Government is concerned, by legislation. I would remind hon. Members that as far as the Committee appointed to deal with the housing of the working classes is concerned, that body did make recommendations. I need not weary the House with details, but I will confine myself to one of its recommendations, namely, that the Committee came to the conclusion that the regulations laid down under the Model Clauses should be established by a public Act of Parliament. I think if His Majesty's Ministers thought fit to announce their intention of putting into operation the recommendations of that Committee they would be taking a step in the direction of valuable, because effective, reform relating to the housing problem. I wish to point out, however, that one of the most important questions to be dealt with in London is locomotion, a question which is being dealt with by the Royal Commission on Locomotion. If hon. Members will consider the composition of that body they will see that it is composed of gentlemen most of whom would be admirable witnesses but ought not to be judges because of their connection with vested interests.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! To discuss the composition of the Commission on London Traffic would be out of order on this Motion.

*MR. CLAUDE HAY: I was merely referring to the fact that locomotion was intimately associated with this question, and I wish to ask in reference to that side of the subject whether my right hon. friend the Home Secretary can give us any information as to how the difficulties between the North-Western Railway and the Home Department stand in respect of the housing of the people in London. I should like to join with my hon. friend in pressing upon the Government the necessity for some definite legislation upon these matters. The Government have no doubt had pressed upon them by various associations demands for the institution of a central authority which should co-ordinate all the working of the Housing Acts throughout London, and I agree that if His Majesty's Government were inclined to entertain their request favourably it would be necessary to pass a Bill to authorise the appointment of two or three permanent commissioners. No doubt hon. Members are so familiar with all the advantages which would accrue from the appointment of permanent commissioners that it is not necessary for me to dilate upon them. At present the problem seems to be partially dealt with by the London County Council in the first place, in the second place by the Borough Councils, and in the third place by the Local Government Board, and in respect of private Bills by the Home Office. Surely in that state of the law and administration it is absolutely necessary that there should be some strong body which should be permanently able to advise and co-ordinate the various schemes which may be on foot for the treatment of this great national question.

There is one other respect in which we all desire to see some improvement in the law, and that is as regards the Small Dwellings Act. Hon. Members have been reminded by the hon. Member for Camberwell that practically this Act has been a dead letter, and the reason for this is that the financial arrangements connected with it do not bring it within the range of practical business, or within reach of the persons whom it is intended should be benefited. If the Government were to facilitate the advance of public money upon what undoubtedly is good security on more favourable terms, a great many of those private semi-philanthropic companies would be largely brought into play instead of remaining more or less dormant. At present the sanitary laws are not properly enforced. You have in Lord Shaftesbury's Acts very ample powers within the definition of the law to deal with what are known as common lodging houses, but if you desire to enforce any useful provision which applies to such dwellings, you are practically excluded from putting it into force in the houses of the poor who have separate occupation of one or more rooms in what are generally known as tenements. The hon. Member for Battersea is conversant with this part of the subject, and no doubt he will be able to say something which will bring that side of the housing question very vividly to the mind of the House. I do most earnestly hope, as a supporter of the Government, that the omission from His Majesty's Speech of any reference to the housing problem does not mean any lack of intention on the part of the Ministry of passing some of those sound practical measures to establish machinery which ought to be in full swing to remedy the terrible evils which are not only saddening to every one of us who cares for the welfare of our country, but which must inflict a lasting injury not only upon the physique, but upon the morals and the greatness of our country.

* MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, N.R., Cleveland): I wish more particularly to refer to the rural aspect of the housing problem. There is no doubt at all that there are many farm labourers' cottages in Gloucestershire or Wiltshire which are just as insanitary and overcrowded as the houses in Camberwell or Devonport, and there are many picturesque villages in the Midlands which could show slums almost as bad as any of those in our great cities. There is no doubt that in the rural districts there are thousands of cases where the cottages are defective in structural repair, and in regard to their sanitary condition, and which are most dangerous to the health of the occupiers. This unquestionably is due to the fact that taking the country as a whole, the number of cottages is insufficient for the population which desires to live in the villages, and the people are compelled to remain in unsuitable houses simply because there are no others. I know of one village with a population of about 430 where there are no fewer than thirty cottages with only one bedroom. In one instance there is a man and his wife and eight children sleeping in one room, and this cottage has never been visited or inspected either by the medical officer or by the sanitary inspector. I have frequently been in cottages in Oxfordshire in which the conditions

under which the people live are gravely injurious to health, and I have heard the bitterest complaints from those who inhabit them against the conditions under which the people are compelled to live. There was a most careful inquiry made into the rural housing problem by the Royal Commission on Labour. This inquiry covered a large number of districts in all parts of England and Wales, and the reports of the Assistant Commissioners give abundant evidence that the housing problem in the rural districts urgently demands attention.

A summary of those reports on rural districts was made by Mr. Little, one of the Assistant Commissioners of the Royal Commission, and his report states that "there is abundant evidence to show that a large proportion of the cottages inhabited by labourers are of a lower standard than is required for decency and comfort," and he states that "the agricultural labourer too frequently lives under conditions which, both physically and morally, are unwholesome and offensive." The Royal Commission itself, in its majority report, states that "the chief evil to which it appears possible administrative remedies should be applied, is the defective structure and insanitary condition of the dwellings of agricultural labourers." The Royal Commission on Welsh Land reported with regard to Wales in very similar terms. I quote these to show that these are not imaginary grievances, because after very careful inquiry these authorities have declared that the problem is one which requires the attention of the Government and of this House. The effects of these conditions to the health, happiness, comfort and morality of those who have to live under them cannot fail to be grave, and the defects in our housing system in the villages is in no small degree responsible for the rural depopulation, which we all deplore. It is because the people cannot get comfortable houses in which to live that many of them are tempted to come into the towns where they may be able to secure proper housing accommodation.

The Chambers of Agriculture throughout the country are now beginning to pass resolutions to the effect that the housing question in country districts is closely connected with the question of rural depopulation, and the last meeting of the Central Chamber of Agriculture, of which I have the honour to be a member, also passed a similar resolution. This House would surely be rendering a great service to the country as a whole if it dealt with this side of the rural depopulation question, and so helped to put a check on that migration from the country to the town which is one of the most sinister features of the social life of our country at the present moment. The city may breed active minds, but the country breeds healthy bodies, and if the city breeds wealth, the country breeds men. The nation would not be in a healthy state if it became more and more a people of city dwellers, and if the country people gradually dwindled more and more in their numbers. This question of housing is one of the most important in connection with the rural depopulation question, and if only for that reason it should have the attention of the Government. The question of course arises: What definite, practical remedies can be proposed for dealing with the state of things that exists in a large number of our villages? The remedies may be divided into those which require legislation and those which require administrative action. Legislation is required to enable local authorities to build cottages in places where they are most needed. In Ireland, under the Irish Labourers Acts, there are no fewer than 17,000 authorised to be built by Boards of Guardians, and 15,000 have already been built at the cost of £2,000,000.

The present Government adopted the policy, and made it their own, to authorise the building of cottages in villages by local authorities. By the Acts of 1890 and 1900 it gave powers to the District Councils to carry out work of this character. The efforts of the Government have not yet been crowned with success, and so far only in two parishes in the whole of England—Ixworth in Suffolk, and Penshurst in Kent—have cottages been built under the Act. These figures come down to the end of 1901, but perhaps the President of the Local Government Board can tell me if any more have been built since then. Only fourteen cottages have been built since 1890, throughout the whole length and breadth of England and Wales, under the Housing of the Working Classes Act in the villages—one cottage to every 1,000 parishes in England and Wales.

The reason why this Act has been a dead letter is not only financial. It is not only the fact that it is difficult to make cottages pay. I myself built a couple of cottages in Oxfordshire, as an experiment to see whether they could be built on terms that would produce a remunerative return, and I found, as the result of this experiment, that if a cottage is built and has attached to it a quarter of an acre of land, at a cost of about £200, and if the rent is 3s. a week, the investment would pay 3 per cent. on the capital, and the money will be repaid by a sinking fund within eighty years, the rates will be paid out of the rents, and a small margin will be left for repairs. It may be that 3s. is a rent above what the majority of agricultural labourers are accustomed, or can afford, to pay. No doubt that is true. But on the contrary, every group of cottages built in a village raises the standard of the whole of the cottages in the village. The sanitary authority can close the worst cottages, the artisans can take the new cottages, and the labourers can take the houses vacated by the artisans. That has been found to be the result in various villages where cottages have been built. The reason why the Act of 1890 has not been put into force more frequently, is the extreme cumbersomeness and costliness of the Act. Before a single cottage can be built in a village you have to set in motion first, the District Council; second, the County Council; and third, the Local Government Board, and all have to make their own inquiries; all have to decide in favour of the scheme, after careful inquiry, before a single cottage can be built at the cost of, say, £200. It is like using a Nasmyth hammer to crack an egg. The second reason why the Act has proved a failure is that the method adopted for taking land compulsorily is the most costly and intricate known to the law. The third reason is that loans are not granted by the Local Government Board except on the condition that they are to be repaid, both for land and buildings, within a period of forty years.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): Can you give me the name of a parish where a loan has been obtained for cottages?

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I can give you Ixworth, in Suffolk, where the whole loan was £1,800. It was granted by the Local Government Board, on condition that it would be repaid in the way I have indicated. That was, I think, in 1899. The measures proposed by those who have taken an interest in this question for a long time are these. In the first place, that the District Council should be permitted to build without needing the assent of any authority except the Local Government Board. You should eliminate altogether the County Council, except to retain the concurrent powers they already possess to build if the other Council refuses to do so. That would reduce in a great degree the costliness and cumbersomeness of the proceedings. In the second place, the loans for building ought to be permitted to be repaid during a period extending over eighty years. These cottages have to be built substantially, and they will produce a revenue long after the expiration of that period. The land should be treated as an asset, and the loan for its purchase should not be repayable. In the third place, County Councils should be allowed to obtain land compulsorily, where that was necessary, by the same method as allotments are now obtainable compulsorily. It is a method far simpler and cheaper, and entailing less expense and less delay. In the fourth place, the limit of half-an-acre of land, which may be attached to a cottage under the Acts of 1890 and 1900, should be extended to three acres. District Councils will not embark on these schemes if they consider that there is likely to be a loss, nor will the Local Government Board sanction them. If the amount of land were extended from a half to three acres, they would be far more likely to build cottages on terms that would prove remunerative.

Then, with regard to administrative reforms, the defects in the sanitary conditions and the overcrowding of houses are largely due in very many districts to the unsuitability of the persons who are appointed as sanitary inspectors. They have frequently no knowledge, not even the most elementary knowledge, of the very principles of sanitary science, and a very vague knowledge of the requirements and possibilities of the law. The Local Government Board might perhaps insist that all sanitary inspectors should be certificated persons, as is already done, I believe, in London and other parts of the country, and not permit the appointment of individuals as sanitary inspectors who do not possess a proper certificate of competence. Further there is the question of the building bye-laws on which a deputation went to the Secretary of the Local Government Board from the Royal Institute of British architects, I think last year or the year before. There was great complaint in many quarters that the bye-laws were too stringent, and made building unnecessarily expensive.

MR. WALTER LONG: Is the hon. Member referring to the new bye-laws recently issued, because I have received no complaints in regard to these? They have been entirely remodelled in the last six months.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: Have the new bye-laws been generally adopted?

MR. WALTER LONG: That has nothing to do with me. They have been issued to the local authorities.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I think the local authorities should have some pressure placed on them to adopt the new bye-laws, for there are many places where the old bye-laws are still in force, and put considerable difficulty in the way of building. The Government might use powers wherever possible to impress on sanitary authorities their responsibilties in regard to the housing of the people in the various districts. Where cases are brought to the notice of the Local Government Board more stringent and more stern action should be taken against the District Councils in default. In the next place, the Local Government Board might at once, and without any need of legislation, extend the period of loans from forty to sixty years, which is the statutory limit under the Act. These are measures which all seem practical, and would do much to remove the grievances of which complaint is made. To many on this side of the House, and I think to many also on the other side, it is deeply disappointing to find in the King's Speech this session practically no reference made to measures of social reform. Many of us hold that a prime and constant duty should be to press forward uninterruptedly measures for the improvement of the physical, moral, and intellectual condition of the great masses of the population. This year we are to have apparently only one small measure, dealing with the employment of children out of school hours. I earnestly trust that, although not mentioned in the King's Speech, the Government will deal with the housing question, both urban and rural, as well as take such administrative action as is in their power in order to remove the grievances of which complaint is made. By so doing they will do much to improve the condition of large sections of the population whose interests are committed to our care.

*MR. TRITTON (Lambeth, Norwood): The hon. Member who has just spoken has referred to this subject as it affects the rural population. I will refer to it for a few moments from the point of view of a London Member. I am spared the necessity of going into harrowing statistics as to the need of legislation on this subject, because the speakers who have already addressed the House have given us ample food for thought in the statistics they read to us, but at the same time I believe myself as one who knows something of this topic that it is perfectly impossible for any speaker to rise in this House and exaggerate the condition of things now existing. If you were to go to any clergyman, any city missionary, any district visitor, any Bible woman, any volunteer man or woman who is going about seeking to relieve the spiritual and temporal necessities of the dwellers in the crowded cities, they will tell you that there is no greater difficulty which meets them at every turn than the ghastly way in which the people are herded together. It is almost impossible to convince people, living under these circumstances, of the doctrine of the love of God. It seems almost idle to speak to these people living in such wretched hovels of the many mansions promised in the better land beyond the grave. I believe that deep down in our inmost hearts there is not any Member of this House but feels, at times, an almost overpowering sadness at the contrasts of existence in this great city, and as he thinks of the awful condition and circumstances under which so many of the poor people live. As a loyal supporter of the Government I desire to express, as has already been expressed, my concern that there is no allusion to this sad subject in the gracious Speech from the Throne.

I believe myself, that the hon. Member for Camberwell was perfectly justified in his statement when he said that it is the most pressing of all necessities in domestic policy. As the House knows, I am interested in other kindred subjects. I have often thought whether the wretched housing has much to account for the drink, or whether the drink had much to account for the wretched housing. At anyrate, they are kindred subjects which deserve the earnest attention of the House. I have been glad to see that the domestic policy of the Government I have the honour to support has taken an improving turn of late. No better measure has been carried through the House lately than the Licensing Act of last session. We all hope, and I most earnestly believe, that that good start is going to be followed up, and we are looking today —all of us— for a sympathetic answer from my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board. It is not for me to point out to him, as has already been pointed out at length and so ably by previous speakers, what measures he is to adopt. I know the difficulties of the problem, but it has a considerable attraction for a great Statesman, and the Government which I support can, I believe, well cope with that problem. I hope, therefore, that before long, they will give us no uncertain sound and make some statement that they, as an Executive, recognise that there are tens of thousands of men and women who live in this country in a state which is a disgrace to our national fame, and that they will do something to take away that reproach.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): Not for the first time has the House of Commons listened to a kindly, non-political and creditable speech from the hon. Member for Norwood. Apart from his innate virtues as a politician, I can attribute much of the sympathy in his speech to the fact that he was born in the parish which I have the honour to represent, and that he possesses that instinctive goodness which characterises all people who come from my bailiwick. He has the deepest sympathy with the struggles of the poor in London, and for many years the hon. Gentleman has earned the reputation which he so well deserves. He has told the House of Commons what his view—which is entirely different from mine—is in regard to this pressing problem in London. I am delighted that the hon. Member should by his speech have put himself in direct opposition to those in his own Parliamentary district who tried yesterday to prevent the London County Council from erecting artisan dwellings in the area of Norwood. I prefer to listen on this subject to the Member for Norwood than to genteel villadom in their petition to the County Council. The hon. Member has told us that some of the drink, much of the vice, and the wretched condition of the houses of the working classes in London are due to overcrowding. Well, from another point of view I wish to add to that testimony. As a County Councillor I have, during the past three weeks, visited eight of those lunatic asylums for which the London County Council is responsible. On eight consecutive days I have had the sad duty imposed upon me—pleasant in some respects, but wholly sad —of seeing 16,000 pauper lunatics, which this city is responsible for maintaining, and going through ward after ward with the sympathetic doctors and the kindly nurses; going from bed to bed, and from ground to ground, and from asylum to asylum. You say to the doctor in such a ward, "What is this?" and he replies, "Drink." And when you ask him if he wants to qualify that, he will add, "Drink, begun by slum life, low wages, and by poverty, which is preventable in the circumference of the Empire." These are facts which some of us are determined shall be brought home to those who care for the life and happiness of the people of this country. Drink, syphilis, and overcrowding—these are the rough causes given by the doctors for the enormous number of lunatics which London, and other cities as well, have to maintain out of the public funds. I venture to say that if the whole of London was housed, not even quite so well, but like the workmen of Messrs. Cadbury at Bourneville, or of Messrs. Lever at Port Sunlight, and of the employees of hon. Members of this House who make no pretence to benevolence or philanthropy in doing it, the average reduction in the ratio of lunatics to the population which would follow would astonish everybody interested in this question.

But, passing from lunatic asylums, only last week, with two Members of the House of Lords who are Members of the London County Council, I gave three days to the inspection of London's Common Lodging-Houses, where the wastrels and unemployables, who, unfortunately, compose those processions we have seen in the streets, in many cases find shelter. If these men are wastrels and loafers and unemployables, it is because too many of them have been born in slums, and reared on gin or grog, with no one to encourage them to face towards the right. When I see wrecks of life-guardsmen and ex-militiamen; when I note that the physique of the poor is getting worse and worse—mainly through their low wages and monotonous toil—and, above all, their bad house accommodation, I am more sympathetic to the renewal of their dwellings than to Mr. Beit's half-million, or three-quarters of a million, spent on his house in Park Lane. I say it is the primary duty of this House to insist on this and every Government taking this question of improving the housing accommodation of the poor seriously in hand. At this moment, within three hundred yards of the House of Commons, the King is doing, what? Why, inaugurating a County Council housing scheme, accompanied by his wife. At this moment His Majesty and the Queen are driving round what was once the site of one of the worst prisons in the country, and on which 5000 people are now housed. I venture to say that if there is one man in England who would have been better pleased than another to have seen a paragraph on the improved housing of the poorer inhabitants of London, it is the King himself. I can assure the President of the Local Government Board that if he will accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Camberwell there is at least one loyal personage who would be delighted to have the King's Speech so supplemented.

What is it that makes the Government timid? Public opinion on this question is ripe—over-ripe; and the time has arrived when the fruit should be gathered. Let the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board take heart of grace from the speeches he has heard behind him. Public opinion will support any legislation on the subject. Incidentally I may say that all the results of improved housing are profitable. If we were asking for a burden on the taxes, or an increase in the rates by what we are demanding, I can understand hon. Members objecting; but within the last ten years the London County Council has either housed, is housing, or projecting plans for housing nearly 100,000 of the population of this city—a population of the size of a city like Chester. And if there had been easier facilities and less red-tape there would have been accommodation for 200,000 people. I do not believe in charity rents. On the contrary, I believe in the people paying fair rents. It does them good and stimulates them to keep their houses in a healthy condition. In fact, the poor would be only too pleased to pay for housing ameliorations. There are, of course, here and there bright patches in the gloom of this picture which has been painted not too darkly as a whole. In the last ten years, even with all the hampering and obstruction, there are 81,000 fewer people living in one-roomed tenements in London than before. But we ought not to have one person with a wife and family living in a one-roomed tenement and the fact that we have still 304,000 living in one-roomed houses is the measure of our work, the standard of our duty, and the gauge of our responsibility. I ask the President of the Local Government Board to read the *British Medical Journal*, *The Lancet*, and, indeed, all the medical journals, which always say the right thing on this matter, and he will find that 124,000 people in London are sadly overcrowded, and that nearly all the large towns in the United Kingdom are nearly as bad, whether we go to Belfast, Dublin, Glasgow, Birmingham, Liverpool or Manchester. I have recently been in some of the Midland towns, and the thing which struck me most was how bad was the condition of many of the working-class areas in those towns; and the villages are as bad as the towns. In the villages we expect something like Arcadia with clematis-covered cottages, but within them typhus and other diseases are lurking, and very frequently there is a shocking water supply.

I walked ten miles in a country district the other day to see a very fine country residence occasionally occupied by a Member of this House, and the sad thing to me about that walk was that I only counted seven people. The scarcity of cottages was simply shocking, and when I went into one or two of the villages I was surprised at the scarcity of the houses and at the overcrowding which, under apparently idyllic conditions, prevailed. The cities are as bad as the towns, the towns are as bad as some of the villages, and the rural areas are worse than they should be. Then I, an advocate of private enterprise, may say, "Oh, leave it to private enterprise." I wish I could.

"For forms of Government let fools contest;
That which is best administered, is best."

When private enterprise does not do its duty, it is time that sympathetic public bodies came in. The public authorities have certainly done well under difficult circumstances, but they want to do more. I would appeal to the President of the Local Government Board that, if he wants to stop the rush of men to the towns—which is the most serious problem this country is at present confronted with—he ought to see that in future local authorities should be able to move in the matter of housing quicker, cheaper, and better than they can at present.

Another advocate of private enterprise may say, "We hope to do something by small measures." Four years ago in this House I was told that I was knocking the bottom out of the Small Houses Acquisition Bill. In four years forty-four houses have been purchased in the United Kingdom by designing owners, under that Act, and it is simply ridiculous to talk about it, because the thrifty workman who buys a house, then adds another, and wants to live out of three or four is the very worst class of landlord. Spare me from the thrifty teetotal deacon who wants to give up work by living on three or four tenants. We are a manufacturing and industrial nation, and our workmen must follow their work. What is the use in giving a workman a brick and mortar anchorage when he cannot pay off the instalments before he dies, and has to leave the house heavily mortgaged. We have got to recognise that the workman must follow his work. Out of 220,000 members in the Hearts of Oak Friendly Society no less than 156,000—thrifty, honest, and able workmen—moved in one year. It is no good telling such men that they can buy their houses, because their work will shift and they will have to follow their employment. Therefore, some public authority has got to step in where private enterprise fails. What we want is, not more house owners, but more houses, better houses, and cleaner houses with cheaper rents. I believe that in London, especially in the East End, we shall have to apply to the rent question some form of judicial rent such as is provided in Ireland in order to prevent 5s., 6s., 7s., and 8s., being paid in Mile End and Stepney, as rent, by men whose average wage is not more than from 16s. to 18s. a week.

Major EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): Would the hon. Gentleman give us his view as to the reason for such an increase of rent?

Mr. JOHN BURNS: I will leave it to the hon. Member who represents the district. I will not repeat what has been already so ably said, but I believe there are a few practical remedies which might be applied. The period of repayment might be extended from thirty or forty years to sixty or seventy years; certainly with regard to, for instance, the Millbank site, eighty or a hundred years would be a proper period when substantial houses are built. Again, there is no reason why we should not have cheaper money for housing than we now have. The London County Council, being a wealthy body, can get money as low as 2 per cent. [An Hon. Member: "No, no!"] Well, I know one occasion on which the County Council borrowed £1,000,000 at 1$\frac{7}{8}$ths per cent., though probably that was because I myself was associated with the promotion of the loan. I believe that the smaller struggling districts should be able to get money cheaply from the Government, just as private owners and corporations are able to get it under the Lands Loans Act. I think, moreover, that if a city like Glasgow or Birmingham makes a large surplus out of its gas, water, and tramways, it ought not to be hampered by the Local Government Board as to how that surplus should be spent. In my opinion, tramway profits generally should be used to cheapen traction, and gas profits to cheapen gas; but the City should be allowed to spend its surplus in its own way, and certainly it ought to be able to spend at least a certain percentage on slum clearances, and so forth.

Another suggestion is that empty houses, deliberately withheld from occupation with a view to enhancing the rental of another portion of the property, should be rated much more heavily than they are at present. Further, I believe that with regard to housing we want the assistance of the Allotments Act. I believe in equal rights for all white men, and I should be delighted to see English Parish Councils given the same power of building cottages that has been given to District Councils in Ireland. Again, if a railway wants to dishouse a lot of people it has compulsory power to do it. Why should not Parish and District Councils have the same power in regard to housing? The President of the Local Government Board will say that they have that power, but the law only applies where houses are insanitary. I know some houses which are apparently sanitary according to all the tests of the Local Government Board, but they are overcrowded to an extent that is disgraceful.

My last practical suggestion is that local authorities, such as the authorities of Birmingham, Glasgow, and London, should have their traction areas extended in the interests of the better housing of the people, and that they should either give facilities to private companies for traction, or, better still, own their own tramways. It is not much good for the London County Council to take people from Westminster to Tooting, and then be prevented from carrying them four miles further, simply because the British Electric Traction Company have spun a steel web of monopoly all round. Every great city ought to have its transit iurisdiction considerably enlarged. Another point is that the County Council ought to have power to buy houses that are not insanitary. They ought to be allowed to buy property with a rental of £40, £50, or £60 a year, and having three or four storeys, which could be converted into artisans' dwellings almost at once, and at very little expenditure. If time permitted, I could give a few more practical suggestions, but I will only say that we have too much of the warehousing of the women and children, the public-housing of the men, and the workhousing of the aged, which is disastrous both to the men, women, and children, as well as to the nation, and demoralising to the community.

Coming as I do from a Scottish family of a rather sturdy stock, nursed as I was upon porridge and mutton broth, never having tasted liquor, and doing my best to preserve my physique under great difficulties, I sympathise most intensely with the occupants of the slums, who are very frequently as they are through no fault of their own. They come to you to ask for a sympathetic hand to help them out of this pit of Tophet, and it is the duty of the President of the Local Government Board to act up to the best traditions of his Department. My advice to him is to insert a paragraph in the King's Speech with regard to this matter. It will meet with approval in high quarters, and will follow up the excellent work done by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer in his admirable Licensing Act of last year. If our industrial efficiency is to be maintained, and our commercial supremacy is to be assured, it can only be done in the homes of the working classes. Let us see that strong healthy women produce strong and healthy children, and that when these children are produced they shall be reared not in palaces and surrounded with oriental luxury, but on the simple common fare out of which we were able to produce the men who stood the brunt of Cressy and Agincourt. Let the poor of our big cities have the opportunity for which they crave and we ask; if we give them that opportunity, the man to show them the way is the President of the Local

Government Board, on whose shoulders the responsibility rests, and I hope he will rise to the level of his duties.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) said he thought his hon. friend, the Member for Camberwell, was well advised to submit this Amendment, and that the hon. Member for Battersea was not far wrong in what he had said, because the position of the agricultural districts was little less than alarming. He was perfectly certain that the want of houses for agricultural labourers was causing the depopulation of the country districts. It was on that account that there was such a derth of labour in the Eastern Counties; and on that account that the villages were full of boys and old men. If such things went on, he was at a loss to see how we were going to man the Navy, to find men for the six Army Corps, or to find men to guard the frontiers of our Empire. The reason of the depopulation of the country districts was obvious. The agricultural labourers of today would not put up with the pigsties which their forbears put up with, with rotten walls and thatches. The proof of the pudding is in the eating, and one ounce of practice was worth a pound of theory. He had been putting up a cottage or two himself, and he had found it impossible to put up a pair of cottages under £600. That was the cost, and he could not get more than £4 a year rent. So that his return for an outlay of £600 was £8 a year, of which £2 must be knocked off for insurance, repairs, rates, taxes, etc., so that really all the return for this outlay was one per cent. He could not expect poor farmers to lay out their capital for such a return. No man unless he was a fool or a philanthropist who wanted a title would lay out his money for a return of one per cent. interest. He was perfectly well aware that the Local Government Board had lately modified their conditions, and he only hoped they would carry out the modified regulations they had suggested. If the hon. Member for Camberwell was really in earnest, as he (Major Rasch) believed he was, this was the line he ought to adopt, and it was on this line, which was the line of least resistance, that they would derive some effect from this particular Motion.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) thought one or two of the remarks of the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just sat down were a little exaggerated. For instance, a rental of £4 was, so far as the neighbouring county of Suffolk was concerned, inaccurate. It was also inaccurate so far as the districts to which the remarks of the hon. Member for Cleveland applied, although the housing question in these places was just as bad.

MAJOR RASCH: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member. I get less than £3 a year rent in many cases.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said it was quite possible that in many cases the rents would not pay interest on the cost of the cottages, but there were other districts where the rent would pay some sort of interest, and where, if the sanction of the Government were obtained, it could be done. He had been doing the same thing in Suffolk, and there he could build a cottage for less than £200. It might not be a very large cottage, but it would contain two or three bedrooms and two living rooms, and, when erected, would let at £5 a year to agricultural labourers earning 13s. or 14s. a week, although of course they did not pay the rent out of that. They depended on their harvest money, £8, which they earned during the harvest, to pay their rent and keep them in clothes. So it was quite possible in many districts, if people were only encouraged — if there was a law passed enabling district or parish councils to carry out the work as they are allowed to do in Ireland, without any of the difficulties or hindrances of the present law—a great deal might be done in the country districts.

He had had great experience also in the London housing question, and he might say there were two great evils to contend against. Of course, in a city like Devonport, where the land was all held by one man, that man could name his own price, but where there were many owners the price of the land was not the difficulty; the difficulty was that where land was cheap the communications were not sufficient and they could not get proper communications. The Government did not assist in any way in increasing the communications with the suburbs and less crowded country districts. Outside our great towns there was any quantity of room for housing many millions of people, but the communication was not sufficient. It was enough to watch the trains at some of our stations in the morning to see how overcrowded they were, and what a lack of facilities there was. There should be new lines of communication to country districts not built over, and the trains we have should extend and make fresh routes to bring the people up to their work. The reason this was not done was because they could not do so without coming to this House and spending thousands of pounds and fighting opposition and competition on all sides, all of which hindrances should be swept away.

In spite of the fact that there were fewer one room tenements to be found in London itself, he feared that one room tenements were beginning to grow up in places which were not now called London. In West Ham there were many one room tenements, so that the evil that afflicted London was only moving a little farther out. There was one great remedy for that, which would have to be faced some day or other. However much they respected the old laws of property, and however sacred might be their regard for vested interests, the Government would have to face the question in this way. They would have to say that when a house was reduced to one room tenements the rent must be proportionately reduced, and that it should not be in the power of the landlords to get a greater rent from such houses than they would obtain if the houses were inhabited by one family. It should be left to the local authorities to make an order, not that the house should be pulled down, but that a house should pay no rent until it was put into proper order. Until that was done, these large spots of vice, misery, poverty, and dirt, and these centres of disease, would remain in our great towns. He hoped it would not be long before the Government did something in that regard. He congratulated his hon. friend on having moved this Amendment, and he hoped the Government would so far give way as to promise to do something in regard to this great question. If not, and the debate was pressed to a division, he hoped that hon. Members opposite would stand by their consciences, even to the extent of voting in favour of the Amendment against the Government.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): Like all other resident squires, I have had much personal experience in this matter, and my last experience is, perhaps, worth putting before the House. From a great deal that has been said, one would imagine that if the local authorities had more power there would be the increase of accommodation which, in some cases, is badly needed. I am as interested as any owner of land can be in the effort to provide good dwellings for the rural labourers, and I retain in my own hands all the cottages on my property. Recently I built one or two pairs of cottages which cost me between £450 and £500 a pair. Last year, when the agricultural depression was very severe, I thought I might assist the farmers in my neighbourhood by reducing the rent of the cottages from £4 to £3 to any labourers who, for twelve consecutive months, had served any one master. I thought that would be an inducement to labourers to stay, but no sooner had I done it than a Local Assessment Committee met and raised the assessment of the cottages very considerably. I asked the reason, and was told that inasmuch as I had chosen to build cottages for labourers which were worth a great deal more than the rent charged, they would add to the assessment an amount which would show what they thought those cottages ought to be let at. Is that an inducement to the country landlord to try to carry out such work? I do not think the Assessment Committee were going outside their powers, but I think I am right in saying that if that line is taken by public bodies, we must remember that it will not be private owners who are failing in their duty, but public bodies who are really stifling the effort of the private owner.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): I hope the President of the Local Government Board will assent to the two very moderate demands for legislation made by the hon. Member for Camberwell. The first demand was that the Government should carry out the extremely definite recommendations of the Joint Committee last year, in order to prevent railway companies and similar bodies evading their obligations in regard to re-housing. The necessary

Bill would not be contentious, and I should think there could be no objection on the part of the Government to promise legislation on that point. The second demand was a proposal, not of the hon. Member for Camberwell himself, but of the Secretary of the Local Government Board. A Select Committee, of which my hon. friend was Chairman, last year considered the allegation of a number of local authorities that the short period over which loans could be spread rendered it difficult to exercise their powers under the Housing Acts. The Committee unanimously declared that allegation to be established, and a proposal was made by the Secretary of the Local Government Board that the period should be extended to eighty years. I cannot believe the Government will fail to carry out that recommendation. It was with those two demands the debate began, and I thought it would be possible for the Government immediately to promise to promote the necessary legislation. But they desire to hear the views of the House on the general question. The Government must be convinced by what has already been said that in all quarters of the country, among all sections of the community, and among all political parties, there is a feeling that this question is one of great urgency, demanding prompt and efficient attention, which attention I have no doubt it will receive.

The two measures referred to by the hon. Member for Camberwell have not been very effective, though doubtless they were promoted and carried out with the best of motives. There must be experimental legislation in these matters, and, provided they proceed to try again, it is in no way derogatory to a Government to admit that they have made a trial which has not been a success. Although not mentioned in the King's Speech, I hope we shall have an assurance that during the present session this matter shall be dealt with. Such a promise, so far from impeding the Government, would greatly strengthen their position, and a further attempt to deal with this difficult and most important question would be generously met and supported in every quarter of the House. It is clear that such a proposal must practically consist in conferring increased powers on local authorities. It has been shown in this debate that local authorities require additional powers, and that existing powers have not been fully exercised because of the existence of certain obstacles. A Bill conferring those additional powers and removing those obstacles would probably be read a second time without opposition; it could be referred to a Grand Committee upstairs, where it would be discussed in a business-like spirit, and afterwards passed through the House with the expenditure of very little time. At the end of the session the Government would then have the credit, which friend and foe alike would gladly give them, of having placed on the Statute-book a measure which would do a great deal towards dealing with this most important question.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): The subject we are now discussing is one which affects not London, or the south of England alone, but the great mass of the urban population of the country. I should like to bring before the right hon. Gentleman the bearing which the incidence of local taxation has on the subject. Last year there was a discussion on a Bill embodying some of the recommendations of the separate Report on Urban Rating and Site Values, issued by Lord Balfour's Commission. In that separate Report we read that—

> "Anything which aggravates the appalling evils of overcrowding does not need to be condemned, and it seems clear to us that the heavy rates on buildings do tend to aggravate these evils, and that the rating of site values would tend to mitigate them."

The hon. Member for Thirsk, in that discussion, rather threw over that separate Report, and it would be interesting to know whether that subject is likely to be dealt with in connection with housing. The question of local taxation has been thoroughly threshed out, while the question of housing is still to a large extent a matter of experiment, and we have it here, on the highest authority, that the reform of local taxation in the way they advocate would tend to mitigate the burdens on buildings and to provide more housing accommodation in the larger towns. I hope the subject will not escape the attention of the right hon. Gentleman in his reply. In the country districts the question is comparatively small as compared with the towns. The town question is made plain in this Report, and whilst the inquiries were going on there was no want of speed in dealing with a measure for the relief of the rates on agricultural land. Now, however, there appears to be less celerity in applying some of the most moderate and admirable provisions to meet the evils which we are now discussing.

* MR. BUTCHER (York): I would like to join with those hon. Members who have urged upon the Government the necessity of bringing forward some legislation upon these vital questions. I will assume that the Government are as keenly alive as any hon. Member to the necessity of making the Housing Acts practical and efficient for the purposes for which they were intended. I think anyone who has listened to this debate will agree that no heroic legislation is necessary in order to make the existing legislation effective. It is rather a question of dealing with defects which at present greatly hamper local authorities. There are no party controversies likely to be aroused by this question, and this debate shows sufficiently that both sides of the House are equally anxious to remedy these defects, and that, if the Government will bring in a Bill, they will receive support from both sides of the House. There are two points I will mention upon which I think the Government ought to do something. The first is that there ought to be some extension in regard to the period allowed for the repayment of loans. Upon this point we have had the recommendation of a Royal Commission, and I hope the Government will give effect to the recommendation. My second point is that power ought to be given to the local authorities to meet the case of a house unfit for habitation, and which is incapable of being rendered fit for human habitation. There is with existing Acts a power for the Local Authority to call upon the owner to make an insanitary dwelling fit for habitation, but the provisions on the subject are difficult of application and cause immense delay. I would suggest that the President of the Local Government Board should consider the necessity of bringing in legislation giving power to the Local Authority to obtain a summary order for the closing and demolition of the insanitary house. Those are two points upon which, I think, legislation is urgently needed.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I wish to say something with regard to the general principle of the question we are now discussing. I think both sides of the House will agree that we have had a most valuable debate, and I congratulate my hon. friend, not only upon bringing this question forward, but also upon having received so much support from both sides of the House. Hon. Members seem to have exhausted the subject from a practical point of view, and I rise merely in consequence of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University, which, I think, has had great effect on both sides of the House. The right hon. Gentleman's speech shows that he would welcome such a proposal on the part of the Government if they introduced a measure to deal with this question during the present session of Parliament. The matter has not been dealt with in the King's Speech; but, nevertheless, this is one of the most pressing questions which require to be dealt with.

There are two points upon which I do not believe there is much difference of opinion, and upon which two Committees have already reported. Firstly, there is the question of the extension of the period for the repayment of loans, which would enable the local authorities to a certain extent to reduce the rents of the houses which they erect. My other point is in regard to an alteration of the Standing Orders of this House, which will place an obligation on railway companies and other public companies to properly house the working classes when they are displaced by railway schemes. These are the two points upon which I do not think there would be any difficulty in carrying through a Bill. I am not speaking of any great radical reform such as the Land Question, because to ask now for such a measure would be hopeless, but I think we are all agreed that the local authorities ought to be given greater power to deal with the owners. Where it is thought now that rehousing is required there are often technical and administrative difficulties in the way, and while I do not wish to dispossess anyone of his rightful possessions, for which a fair price ought to be given, I think the owners of insanitary areas and slum property ought not to receive a single sixpence above the proper value. That is the point upon which I think a reform could be effected by giving greater powers to the locality to deal with these areas. In conclusion I wish to endorse the sentiment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University, and to say that we on this side of the House shall welcome any attempt to deal with this question during the present session of Parliament.

*MR. WALTER LONG: No one can deny that the debate we have listened to this evening has, as the hon. Gentleman opposite just said, indicated practically unanimity of opinion in all quarters of the House in respect of what I may call small reforms as opposed to drastic or great measures. But the hon. Gentleman for Camberwell, in the interesting speech he made, did not confine himself to small suggestions. The hon. Member suggested some reforms of a heroic character, but he also said that he felt satisfied that these suggestions would not be adopted by the Government, and he only threw them out to indicate what his own policy would be. Putting aside those drastic proposals which have been made by hon. Members rather as an expression of their own views than as a forecast of anything they hope to see carried out, we reach, as the outcome of this debate, some minor suggestions, in reference to which I hope I shall be able to give the House assurances which will not be altogether unsatisfactory.

The debate has been of a very wide character, because almost of necessity hon. Gentlemen have addressed themselves to questions not only connected with the Acts of Parliament relating to the housing of the working classes, but also to the administration of the sanitary laws. After listening to the debate, and after hearing hon. Gentlemen on both sides wax eloquent about the apathy of the Local Government Board and the failure of my Department to put pressure upon local authorities, and the indifferent performance of their duties by medical officers of health and sanitary inspectors, I desire to say that I only wish those sentiments prevailed in the breasts of those same hon. Members when the Local Government Board do take action in such matters. Almost invariably it happens that the moment pressure is put by my Department upon a medical officer, or upon an inspector of nuisances, the result is that the hon. Member in whose constituency this occurs will communicate with me telling me that grave injustice is being done. When I tell District Councils that they ought to employ properly qualified men; when I maintain this position and decline to sanction any other appointments, hon. Members generally bring pressure to bear upon me, either by cajolery or threats. These hon. Members are generally those who are the first to tell the Local Government Board that they do not do their work properly. I hope that, in future, the hon. Members who ask me to put pressure upon local authorities and ask me to take action, will preserve the same demeanour when they address their constituents, and decline to be induced by them to put pressure upon us, and thereby make it more difficult for my Department to carry out their suggestions.

There is no doubt that, without any resort to heroic legislation, a great deal can be done in connection with sanitary administration. There is a great deal that can easily be improved, and at very little cost. One proposal which is made repeatedly to the Local Government Board is that an individual, holding a public health appointment of prime importance, might be allowed to hold other posts at the same time. I have so far refused, and so long as I am responsible for the Department I shall continue to refuse, to accede to that proposal. I shall insist that there shall be no merging in one individual of two or three appointments, to all of which it is impossible that he can do justice, even if he could do it to one. In a recent case I have suggested that a separate appointment should be made to the post of inspector of nuisances. I have called the attention of the local authority to the fact that, at the current rate of inspection, it will take twelve or fourteen years before all the houses in their district will have been inspected. When I make these comments the reply that is made to me is that I am interfering with the discretion of the local authority, and interfering with gentlemen who are doing good work. Then the next step is for the Member for the Division to come to me to try to convince me. When he fails he falls back upon the old story of red-tape, and he threatens to raise the question on the Vote for my salary when the Estimates come before the House of Commons. Under these circumstances, can you wonder that Ministers are necessarily exposed to the criticisms we have heard today? If hon. Gentlemen will give us their support in the districts which they themselves represent, they will, I venture to say, be doing more practical work in connection with these problems than by making speeches, however effective and eloquent these speeches may be.

I recognise entirely the non-Party character of the debate that has taken place today, and I rejoice at it. I am bound to say, at the same time, that I do not think the hon. Member for Camberwell and hon. Members on the other side of the House today have been altogether fair to His Majesty's Government in reference to what has been done in connection with this question. We had a debate on the Address last year on the same subject initiated by the hon. Member for Camberwell, and then there were four points to which he made special allusion, and they are the four points around which the debate today has mainly centred. I need not refer further, to the proposals for what is called a drastic reform of the land question, because they are not regarded by those who make them as within the domain of practical politics at present. Then there are the question of the extension of the time of loans, the question of transit, and the question of administration. Now I do not think the hon. Gentleman has been quite fair to the Government, nor has he done himself justice, because he was responsible for the Amendment last year, and he might have taken some credit to himself for the result of the promises which were then made on behalf of the Government. On the contrary, he and those who supported him have almost continuously condemned the Government. We have heard of the gross indifference, inaction, and neglect of the Government on this great question, and similar statements had been made this afternoon for every one of which I venture to say there is not a shadow of foundation.

In regard to the question of loans, the Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the matter was in my hands in the middle of last year, and if we had not had an autumn session, which threw a great deal of additional work on my Department, I should have been able to give fuller time to the consideration of the Report. It was my duty to secure not only that the recommendations of the Report should be considered by my Department, the Treasury, and the other Departments concerned, but that, in arriving at a decision, we should adopt some practice with regard to the loans which would put the whole question on a permanent and satisfactory basis. I do not want to make any improper excuses for my Department, but I doubt whether the House realises how heavy were the demands made upon it and other Departments during the whole of the last autumn session, and how very little in the way of holidays some of those in the Departments have had. Therefore it was impossible to hasten the final consideration of these recommendations, and the final solution of the question, but I am now, I hope, within measureable distance of the end. I think it will be my duty during the session to ask Parliament to pass a Measure dealing with the loan question, and some other difficulties which have arisen. But when I am asked why it is not referred to in the King's Speech, I venture to say that there has been no session in which Measures have not been passed which were not included in the King's Speech. I confess it did not occur to me that in connection with the smaller Bills pertaining to my Department, it was either necessary or desirable to enumerate them in the long list of Measures already to be found in the King's Speech. Some of them may be found on the Statute-book before the end of the session, and though they may be unpretentious in character, they will probably be quite as useful to the local authorities as some larger Measures.

It is no use talking of this question of the housing of the working classes as if it could be remedied by one or two of the suggestions made today. It is not by facilitating the powers of demolition and rebuilding, or by the building of new houses altogether, that it can be done. It is a much larger question than that, and it includes that very important subject to which greater reference was made last year than this year, namely the question of transit. We are told that we do not make the railway companies do their duty in regard to the Cheap Trains Act. The hon. Gentleman who moved this Amendment told us that there had been a considerable increase in the provision of these trains in recent years. There are many more workmen's trains now than five or six years ago, and everybody who has studied the problem knows perfectly well that it is not merely a question of profit and loss to the railway companies. Whether they want, or do not want, to put on workmen's trains, it is a question of the possibilities of the case, having regard to the traffic they have to carry. That is the most important part of the problem in London itself. My right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade has obtained sanction to the appointment of a Royal Commission which will inquire into the whole question of transit within the metropolis. Therefore, two of the most important points raised in this Amendment last year have been attended to between the debate of last year and the present time.

Now I come to administration. I have certainly no desire to claim any undue credit for the Department with which I am connected, but I venture to say that, during the whole of the past year and the preceding year, as the local authorities themselves would, I am sure, testify, we have been unremitting in our endeavours to ascertain at first hand in the localities what are the difficulties in the way that ought to be removed. I do not think enough justice has been done to the legislation already passed through the House dealing with the housing question. It has been said, with perfect truth, in many eloquent speeches which have been delivered on both sides of the House, that there are festering sores in the shape of slums to be found in all our large communities, and that they are a disgrace to our civilisation. At the same time it is due to the local authorities to state that in all our great municipalities, enormous strides have been made in the last ten or fifteen years in dealing with the housing question. A great deal of most excellent work has been done, and mayors and members of corporations will admit that the Acts already in existence had provided machinery sufficient for the purpose they had in view. I think it is only fair when so much criticism is forthcoming that there should, at all events, be some few points advanced on behalf of the local authorities, and also on behalf of the legislation which, from time to time, we have carried in dealing with this question. There is difficulty in dealing sometimes with what, for the sake of brevity, are called "condemned buildings." Most certainly in no quarter of the House will you find any sympathy for the owners of property who fail to recognise that property carries with it responsibilities, and who allow their property to become a positive curse to the community. Provision was made to meet these cases in the Act of 1980, passed by my right hon. friend the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. I will not trespass on the time of the House by reading the whole of Section 21 of that Act, but if any one will read it carefully he will find that it is almost impossible to conceive language better calculated to give effect to the views which my right hon. friend enunciated then, and which I endorse now. There is a financial difficulty arising under Section 21 which has hitherto met local authorities in their attempt to bring the Act into force. The suggestion has been made today that we ought to enable them to obtain these sites and buildings easily and cheaply. Well, I venture to say that that section is as strong and full as it is possible for anything to be. Only one practical suggestion has been made to me on the subject. That was by a Corporation which has had great experience in connection with this matter. They told me that there is nothing wrong in the section; its provisions should make it impossible for property to be sold beyond its fair value, regard being had to its condition. They said that that was all satisfactory and sufficient; but it is the practice of submitting the price to arbitration which has, for some unexplained reason, led to the financial difficulty to which I have referred. It has been suggested to me by that Corporation that the law should be altered to make it the same as that which obtains in the City of London, where it is possible to refer a case of the kind to a jury. The power to refer such cases to a jury is so effective that practically it is not exercised. The very fact that it is there is sufficient to hold the owners of such property in check. That is a suggestion which I am considering; it is one of the smaller proposals to which I have referred, such as the hon. Member for Cambridge had in his mind when he spoke of small Amendments which we might make in the general law.

Then there is the question raised by the hon. Member for York—the difficulty of getting possession of the condemned buildings. There is no doubt that that is a practical difficulty. The powers are quite sufficient for the condemnation of the building if it is overcrowded or in an insanitary condition. The local authority can either close the building or call upon the owner to put it in a sanitary condition, but no power seems to exist enabling the local authority to deal with the property between the time of its condemnation and their getting possession of it. And here, I think, the law might with advantage be altered. This again is only a small proposal, but one which might be of use. All I have said applies to these difficulties as they exist in urban districts. I have listened with the greatest interest to the speech made by the hon. Member for Lichfield in which he gave us a most interesting account of his experience in the rural districts. When he came to tell us about the rents he was getting for his cottages, and the cost of building them, I felt my mouth water as a landlord who has had considerable experience for twenty-five years in building and letting cottages in a rural district. I do not think we could get 3s., or even 2s. 6d., a week as rent for such cottages in my district. The hon. Member talked of building a cottage for £200, but he will pardon me for saying that these figures are illusory, because £200 in one district means £250, or even £300, in another district. And it must be remembered that 3s. a week, taken as a return for the money spent would be prohibitive as applied to the majority of rural districts. The hon. Gentleman gave an instance of a village where he saw twenty-one cottages unfit for human habitation, and we were told that the legislature ought to deal with such cases, and that the local authority ought to be compelled to act more promptly in shutting up old houses. But what are the difficulties we have to deal with? Let us say that there are twenty cottages in that condition. The owners are, in nine cases out of ten, non-resident; they have bought the cottages as a speculation, and have probably never seen them. Are you to build new cottages out of the rates? In such a case any one who had made a suitable provision of cottages on his own estate would have to bear an additional burden on his rates because his neighbours had not done their duty. Is it any wonder that local authorities hesitate to act in dealing with this problem, which is altogether different from that to be dealt with in urban districts? It is not because they do not appreciate the evil effects which arise from overcrowding. There is not a monopoly of desire for reform in any one set of individuals. Everybody realises that if we could deal as effectually as we could wish with this matter, we should do much to promote sobriety in the classes who meet with the terrible temptations engendered by squalid surroundings, and should also add to the muscle of the nation. It is idle to ignore the fact that, apart from the small questions to which I have referred, there are, in the opinion of many, other and larger difficulties which can only be approached in the drastic manner suggested by some hon. Members for dealing with the land problem; but I venture to say that, whatever advantage there may be thought to be in that suggestion, it will be many a long day before proposals of such a kind will be given effect to by any Government. Small amendments of the law are possible and desirable; and I hope it will be my fortune, after this debate and the assurances made to us, to find every desire in all quarters of the House to welcome small non-controversial proposals which will have the effect of altering the law in the directions I have indicated. If we shall not have any heroic legislation, at any rate proposals of that kind will be welcomed in all quarters and will be regarded as helpful. I hope, therefore, that it will be possible for me to make some such small alterations in the law as I have suggested. I hope it will also be possible to deal with the question of loans, and put that matter on a satisfactory basis, not only in regard to sums required for buildings, but other expenditure, so that there shall not be the variety that at present exists and results in the imposition on the ratepayers of different burdens for the same class of work.

DR. MACNAMARA: What about the period of payment?

*MR. WALTER LONG: That is, of course, included in the statement I have made. I take the Report of the Committee as it stands. Naturally, I do not commit myself to adherence to every part of the Report, but in regard to rehousing, the proposal is that the period should be extended to eighty years, with certain provisions in regard to the mode of repayment. My object is to secure cooperation in the different Departments, so that we may have a common policy and get rid of uncertainty and variation. I am not possessed of the eloquence of some hon. Members, and I, therefore, cannot put my views in the same attractive shape, but I hope I have said enough to show that the Government are not behind the House and the country in their desire to deal in a practical and efficient manner with the housing problem. We certainly are not wanting in sympathy with those who are condemned to such conditions of life as we know to exist in too many towns, and in some even of the country villages, and I hope that if the House remains in its present frame of mind we shall avail ourselves of the opportunity to make some modest proposals for legislation which will not be regarded as unworthy, though they are not large and searching measures of reform.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): This debate, in my opinion, is perhaps the most important in which we shall be engaged this session. It will encourage the right hon. Gentleman to bring forward a measure in the direction which my hon. friend the Member for Camberwell has indicated. The right hon. Gentleman seems to consider that he has been ill-used by Members of constituencies who always come forward to attack the Local Government Board for their action to these constituencies. Well, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to remember, and I think he is encouraged by this debate to remember, that these Members are only one, or at most two, and that he will have the support of all the remaining 668 in the measure which he is proposing to bring forward. I gather from the right hon. Gentleman—and I am very happy to hear it—that he holds out the prospect—that he makes a promise, of a Bill this session. This my hon. friend the Member for Camberwell has achieved by bringing forward his Amendment; and a most valuable gift it is. That being so, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman not to be too modest in his proposals. He has got behind him the House of Commons, and he has got, as one hon. Member said, the power of the House of Lords. These are circumstances which do not often unite themselves. Therefore I would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that small Bills on great questions often postpone a real remedy, as has happened in this very case. When the housing of the poorer classes was brought forward, two or three years ago, we were told, "We have passed a couple of Bills; wait until we see how they work." We have waited to see how they would work, and we have found that they did not work at all. Therefore, to bring in a measure, or measures, which do not really meet the case is actually doing no good at all, and may do some harm.

There was some talk of dealing with the railways, but that would be only touching a particular point apart from the main question altogether. The right hon. Gentleman mentioned what is really the point of the case: How are you to deal with insanitary houses? In my opinion you ought to deal with them as a public nuisance. You ought not to deal with a large insanitary area at great expenditure, but you ought to have power to deal with individual houses as you deal with other nuisances. If you do that you get rid of what you desire to get rid of. When the right hon. Gentleman introduces his measure—which I hope he will do before long—I trust he will deal with that aspect of it as well as with the smaller difficulties he mentioned.

There are two points to which I wish to direct attention—one is the shutting up of insanitary houses and the other the getting possession of them. I hope that these will appear in his Bill. I am not going to detain the House by discussing the details which have been dealt with so fully and practically in this debate. I feel myself very strongly the absolute necessity of dealing with the rural districts. I live in a rural district myself, where the housing of the labouring people is detestable, and something ought to be done regarding it. I was very sorry to hear the manner in which my hon. and gallant friend opposite the Member for the Newport Division was treated by his Assessment Committee, but I would suggest to him that he should reform his Assessment Committee in order that they should deal as liberally with the matter as I am sure he wishes. I was glad to hear my hon. and gallant friend put the cost of building cottages at a lower figure than that given by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Chelmsford Division, who said that they would cost £600. I am quite sure that very good cottages indeed can be built for a great deal less. Therefore, the difficulty is not so great as has been stated.

I will only say to the right hon. Gentleman I am quite sure, from the language which has been used on both sides of the House, that if he goes forward on this matter boldly and strongly, he will have the support—I was going to say the unanimous support—of the House of Commons in legislating in this direction, and in the administration which is so urgently necessary for the curing of one of the greatest social evils in this country. We talk of pecuniary difficulties in this matter, when we think nothing of spending millions upon objects which are, in my opinion, far less necessary and far less useful. I think we might do something, at all events, for our country at home, in the direction of developing its resources, of which the greatest of all is the health and well-being of the labouring population. If you would only spend, I will not say a tithe, but a quarter per cent. of the money you are spending upon objects which, in my opinion, are far less valuable, you would be doing that which I believe would redound to the greatest advantage of the Empire of which we are all so proud.

*SIR JOHN DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham): I think that every hon. Member on the other side will be satisfied with the reply which has been given by my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board, as far as the question is connected with his Department. I think we have had an assurance from him that he will take up the subject as far as it deals with the extension of loans in the course of the present session. I have been more fortunate during the autumn than my right hon. friend, in not having so much labour on my hands. I therefore amused myself during the past few months by going carefully into the report of the Committee which inquired into that subject last year, and I have drafted a Bill dealing with the recommendations of the Committee. If I am fortunate in the ballot tomorrow, I trust the right hon. Gentleman and the Government will see their way to giving facilities for the passing of that Bill, as by doing that they will economise time, and the subject will be dealt with. Although I think the House is fully satisfied with the reply of my right hon. friend, we have not yet had a reply to another side of the housing question, which in my judgment is much more important. A Committee sat last session to inquire into the Standing Orders of Parliament, and I should be glad to know from my right hon. friend the Home Secretary whether he will be prepared to introduce a measure embodying the proposals made by that Committee with reference to the displacement of persons by companies and public authorities. I have also drafted a Bill on that matter, and will try my luck with it in the ballot tomorrow. The extension of the period of loans is a very useful but a small part of the question; a much more important problem is the evasion by companies and public authorities of their obligations when they displace large bodies of the population under compulsory powers. I have given the figures in this House on a former occasion, and they show that this is one of the most important points in the housing problem. I, therefore, sincerely ask my right hon. friend to take up the recommendations of this Committee and introduce a Bill dealing with the subject this session.

MR. WALTER LONG: May I explain to my hon. friend? I regret I omitted in my reply to refer to this question. As my hon. friend knows, the amendment of the Standing Orders is a matter for the Chairmen of Committees rather than for the Government. I am entirely in favour of the suggestions made, but whether they should be embodied in a Bill is a question I cannot answer until I have had some further conference with the Chairmen of Committees. I believe I shall be able to know what their views are in a few days.

* SIR J. DICKSON-POYNDER: Then we shall be able to hear from the Government whether legislation is required or not, and, if so, whether it will be introduced.

MR. WALTER LONG assented.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said he thought an Irish Member was entitled to speak on this question, because during the debate, it appeared to be imagined that it did not touch Ireland at all. As one of the Members for Dublin, he could assure the House that this was a burning question in Dublin, and also in Cork, Limerick, Waterford, and other places. The housing problem really touched Dublin in a more extraordinary way than any other city in the Empire. Its death rate was higher than that of any other city in the three Kingdoms, and that arose principally from the want of proper accommodation for its artisan and working classes. At present, they were only touching the fringe of the subject. Twenty years ago, when the present King was Prince of Wales, a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the question. How far had they progressed since? Apparently every Government was afraid to go to the root of the question, which was the land question. He knew he would not be in order in discussing the question of land values, but it was at the root of the housing problem.

There could be no doubt that this was a question upon which all sections of the House were more or less agreed. It was one of the most important subjects that the House could discuss, because all over the three Kingdoms the natural trend of population was towards the cities, and the municipal authorities had not the requisite power to enable them to provide the necessary accommodation for the influx of population. The extension of loans, and the giving of increased powers to muncipalities, would not solve the problem. They wanted a much more drastic remedy. He was a member of an Urban District Council that was at present engaged in endeavouring to solve this question, and they found that the expense of obtaining the ground upon which the slum dwellings were situated was enormous, the legal expenses were enormous, and the delay was notorious. The system of transferring titles to property in this country really demanded attention in this regard, as it often happened that an Urban District Council had to pay more for obtaining the site than the building would be worth when erected. He did not at all agree with the President of the Local Government Board when he thought the House would be satisfied with what he called his modest proposals. This difficulty was not going to be met by a moderate proposal; it was going to be met by the consideration by this House of all the questions involved. They involved the principle of the welfare of the working classes of the three Kingdoms.

Everybody who had studied the social evolution of the times must be aware that in all our great cities, and, for the matter of that, in many of our small towns and villages, the housing of the working classes was the crux of the question at the present moment. The effect of this system was most serious to the community at large. The health of the working classes was stunted; they were placed in positions not favourable to moral growth, and the result, generally, was that in the three Kingdoms an inferior class of people was being produced by the environments by which they were surrounded. Therefore, as an Irish Member representing a city constituency, he was of opinion that there was no question more deserving of the attention of the House than this. He saw many other measures put down in His Majesty's Speech, as being of prime importance, which could not compare with this question. What was the fact? Almost every Member had appealed to his constituents to vote on this question of the housing of the working classes, and yet, when it came to be discussed seriously in this House, on the Amendment of the hon. Member for Camberwell, they found on both sides of the House, except among a few earnest men, a desire to shelve it with a moderate proposal. A moderate proposal never yet met the crux of a great question in the affairs of a nation. They wanted to solve this question, and unless it was solved something more serious than hon. Members expected might happen. In the past, civilisation had been overturned by the incursions of barbarians into a country, and it is possible that our civilisation might be overturned; if it were, it would be by our slums—by the rebellion against the land system, and the capitalist system, which condemned the workers to live in a state of barbarism. When this Motion went to a division, as he trusted it would, he should have great pleasure in voting for it, and no matter who adorned the Government Benches, he trusted there would always be a certain amount of opposition on that side until this question was satisfactorily settled, so that the workers might have that to which they were legitimately entitled—a decent home at a reasonable rate.

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said as a Member of the Committee which carefully considered the question of the terms of the repayment of loans, which underlay so much of the present discussion, he desired to say a few words. He hoped when the right hon. Gentleman came to consider the Report of the Committee, he would not simply adhere to the term of eighty years, but that he would remember that there was a division, on his (Sir Albert Rollit's) Motion as to whether that term should not be 100 years considering the permanent nature of the land as an asset, and also the public policy which underlay the question of the housing of the working classes; the majority in that division was only a majority of one against the substitution of the term of 100 for eighty years, and but for the accident of one of the Members for Ireland, whose representatives had rendered great assistance to those Members of the Committee who, like himself, favoured the greatest facilities for housing, had had to leave the Committee to attend to his duty as Whip in this House, the voting would have been equal. The length of the term of repayment might be most material. It had been truly said it would make only a marginal difference in the rent, but that difference was sometimes all the difference. On the one hand, they had cheap houses run up by a jerry builder; on the other, those erected by the municipality under conditions, resulting in good and permanent houses. The hon. Member for Plymouth on that point quite convinced the Committee that there might be a difference of 1s. a week in these terms, and that was a difference which was all material. The effect of that difference was that if the municipalities and other local authorities had to put up houses on a short term of repayment the result might be that they would have to raise the rent and let them to an entirely different class of tenant to that which was contemplated by Parliament. On the other hand, if they had to reduce the rent, then they served one class, and one only, at the expense of the general body of ratepayers.

This question was not a political question, and it was not a class question, because the object of these Acts of Parliament was to benefit the whole community. The principle which in it underlay the protection of health was the same as that which underlay Acts for the equalisation of rates, which he had always strongly supported. But, while he was determined to press this housing question, he thought the House might reasonably accept the promises and assurances given by his right hon. friend, who had, as he thought, very properly complained that there had been some disposition to overlook what had already been accomplished. He hoped his right hon. friend would allow him, on behalf of the municipalities, to say that his right hon. friend had set an example, in going down to the districts where these problems were being solved, and getting technical information on the spot, second only to that of the Colonial Secretary in his visit to South Africa. Housing was the most pressing social problem of the day, second only to national pensions, and it must be kept in the forefront of social legislation.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said the speech of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to this matter had not, he thought, given a grain of comfort to those Members who sat on the Opposition side of the House, and who certainly represented a large body of public opinion. They were not satisfied with his modesty on this occasion, however much they might admire it on others. They represented diverse interests in diverse parts of the country, which was a good education for discussing matters in this House. It had been intensely gratifying to him to listen to the speeches made by the hon. Members for Shropshire and Essex with reference to the cottages they were building on their estates, but this was not a matter of the policy of any one man, it was a question of the policy of the country. In his constituency it was not a question of the landlords building houses, but of the people being able to get land on which to build their own houses. There was plenty of land if the people could only get it, and they could get it but for the restrictions placed on them. He was sorry to see the modesty of the right hon. Gentleman and his disinclination to deal with the question.

One reform they desired was that properly constituted authorities should have power to acquire land where they wanted it. Lerwick, the principal town of Shetland, was an object lesson; there the Borough Council had no power; the County Council had no power; neither could move hand or foot; and just at the very edge of this important town were a number of slums which were a disgrace to the town and the nation. There was an enormous danger threatening any town which allowed abominable dwellings of this character to be erected at its very gates. There they had no sanitary inspector, and nothing could be done except through legislation in this House; if such things were allowed to go on, it was not difficult to forecast the result. The duty of hon. Members in the House was not to be modest but to speak their minds. These places to which he alluded had no back gardens, no sanitary arrangements, no water, no lighting; nothing but an open sewer, only occasionally flushed, running in front of the houses. That was surely enough to point out that such Boards as they had in Scotland, like the Congested Districts Board or the Crofters Commission, should have big and extensive powers for dealing with this question. They should have power to acquire land. It was only a question there of getting the land, and that was not a very extravagant demand. It was the duty of the House to get to the bottom of these difficulties, and this proposal would not meet the requirements of the country in the matter. It was a matter of urgent and pressing necessity, and he was convinced that no question of greater importance could come before the House this session. Their duty here was to find out who were the responsible parties, and to saddle them with the responsibility.

That responsibility rested with the Government in the first place, and with the individual property owner in the second. Property had great duties as well as rights, and if those duties were neglected, the Legislature would soon have to take into account the question of how far the rights of property should be permitted to control and interfere with the well-being of the nation. Why should not the owners of slum property be made responsible? Why should they be paid extragavant prices for their abominable, festering dens of iniquity? Why should not such property be condemned, so that the owners would be glad to sell it for anything they could get? But, after all, what was the use of spending thousands of pounds in building beautiful workmen's dwellings, if the places of our workpeople, the backbone of the country, were to be taken by the refuse and scum of foreign nations? In the interests of the health and well-being of the nation at large, the standard of civilisation, prosperity, and comfort should be raised to as high a level as possible. But, as the lower organism would always kill the higher, it was the duty of every section of the community to endeavour to protect and foster the highest civilisation we could possibly have in the country. He cordially supported the Amendment.

*MR. FORDE RIDLEY (Bethnal Green, S.W.): We are all in sympathy with the wording of the Amendment, but I am surprised that the aspect of the question just referred to, viz., the unrestricted influx into this country of pauper aliens, has not been more generally discussed. It is the key to the housing question, especially in the East End of London; it is the cause of all the overcrowding and the insanitary dwellings that there exist. I agree that heroic measures are not required to deal with this question. To talk of the extension of the period for the repayment of loans, or of any other aspect of the case, is like pouring water into a barrel and leaving the bung out, unless some measure is introduced by which this influx of foreign paupers is stopped. I know of cases in the East End where new buildings have been very quickly made as insanitary as any in the district. The "Boundary Street area," a great slum district in East London, was cleared, and, at enormous cost, the County Council erected magnificent blocks of model dwellings, which are already nearly half full of aliens, who live under conditions such as we would not like to see our working classes subjected to. I hope something will soon be done to remedy this evil. It is growing by leaps and bounds. Nobody can be blind to the great increase in the number of foreign criminals constantly being brought before the Courts. The question is pressing itself to the fore, and the evil will soon become so rampant that measures will have to be taken to cure it. I am sorry hon. Members intend to press the Amendment to a division, because the Government have already appointed a Commission on the question of the immigration of foreign paupers, and while that Commission is sitting, legislation is impossible. I hope, however, the Government will see that there is no undue delay in the presentation of the Report of that Commission, which has now been sitting long enough and has collected sufficient evidence to arrive at a conclusion. I, for one, gratefully accept the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman that he will do what is necessary to introduce a Bill shortly dealing with the question, and I hope the Government will also take steps to mitigate the national curse of this country—namely, that of being made the dumping-ground of foreign criminals, from whatever country they may come.

*MR. DUKE (Plymouth): So far as the practical aspect of this question is concerned, I think the declaration of my right hon. friend will give great satisfaction to municipal authorities throughout the country. The point which those, who have been endeavouring to bring the Housing Acts into successful operation, have of late years been pressing on the Local Government Board, is that some steps should be taken to render it possible to provide houses at such a price that they can be occupied by the poorest classes of the community. At present that is impossible, and the chief blot on the existing system is that the excellent dwellings erected by local authorities are occupied by people considerably higher in the social scale than those for whom the dwellings were intended. Local authorities find it impossible to provide houses at a rent which people earning 20s. or 25s. a week are able to pay, and consequently this class, when driven from their old insanitary dwellings are simply compelled to create insanitary areas elsewhere. I do not know that the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman would remedy that, but it would be a step in the right direction. His suggested change in the rate of interest will make a difference of about ½ per cent. on the cost of the loan. I think my right hon. friend might increase that to 1 per cent., and so secure an abatement of about 1s. per week on the rentals of cottages which at present are 4s. or 5s. I hope the Local Government Board will not insist on the adoption of the instalment system, as a condition for the extension of the period of repayment, because the result of such insistence will be to maintain the difficulty which is at present a barrier with many local authorities in the way of providing dwellings.

If the right hon. Gentleman will give the local authorities the option of paying upon either of the systems at present in force, that will be some measure of relief.

Owing to the burden thrown upon them for sewage work and sanitary undertakings, many corporations have reached very near the limit of their borrowing powers. In the borough I represent, this problem remains just as much unsolved as it has at any time during the last twenty years. Dwellings have been erected, and they have been readily occupied by persons who ought to be provided for by private enterprise. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will be able to introduce Clauses which will do something to deal with the present difficulty of getting possession of insanitary buildings, and which will reform such matters as those which deputations from local authorities have drawn his attention to.

I should like this question of housing put into the hands of inspectors of the Local Government Board dealing separately with this matter, who would be able to give practical advice to corporations as to the easiest and cheapest methods of bringing housing schemes into operation. These schemes are often stifled on account of the expense put upon them. There is the expense of numerous inquiries, costly plans, and delay; one obstacle after another interposes itself, with the result that the scheme does not get carried out. The right hon. Gentleman has at any rate one gentleman who has been engaged with conspicuous success in carrying out housing schemes, and who is probably the author of the most successful housing scheme for the poor which is in operation. If the right hon. Gentleman could create a sub-department, where local authorities would find a consistent course followed, to render assistance from time to time in dealing with these practical difficulties, he would give a most valuable token of his sympathy with the desires of local authorities for reform of the housing of the populations over whom they have charge, Last year, in the debate which took place upon this subject, I said that the requirements of the Local Government Board as to housing sometimes threw a burden of 50 per cent. additional upon the cost of the scheme. I have had the opportunity of looking into the information which was then supplied to me, and I am satisfied that I did an injustice to the Local Government Board. I have attended the deputations which waited upon the right hon. Gentleman, and I have seen that, at any rate under the direction of the right hon. Gentleman, a sympathetic attention is given to the requirements of local authorities, which gives general satisfaction to the representatives of those local authorities in the country. I have no difficulty as to what I shall do on this Amendment. I regard it as a mere attack for political purposes upon His Majesty's Government, and therefore I shall vote against it.

Mr. MOON (St. Pancras, N.), I think a great many of us sitting on this side of the House must have felt relieved to know that the omission of this question from His Majesty's Speech was not intentional or deliberate. This proposal puts some of us in the position of being called upon to vote against an Amendment with the terms of which we thoroughly sympathise. I know that the reasons for voting against this Amendment are difficult to explain to those who do not understand the position. I am rather afraid, from the course which was pursued on a similar Amendment last year, that this question will be pressed to a division in spite of the satisfactory assurance which has been given by the Minister in charge. I think that it is a regrettable situation There is one matter upon which I think there has been a decided omission. There is a provision for demolition and reconstruction, but what we want is some provision for adaptation. I quite agree that we do not want heroic measures, for what we require is legislation on minor points.

*Mr. HERBERT ROBERTSON (Hackney, S.): I do not think that, by altering the law as regards the erection of workmen's dwellings or by creating better means of transit to crowded centres, you will ever be able to remedy the congestion of the population in big towns. The only remedy which will be effective is one which lies with private enterprise, and that remedy is the removal of factories from the centre of towns more or less to the outside and to districts where houses can be built cheaper. That is the only observation which I desire to make.

Question put.

House divided:—Ayes, 166; Noes, 205. (Division List No. 2).

AYES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Abraham, William (*Rhondda*)
Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*)
Ambrose, Robert
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*)
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(*Cardigan*
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Ellis, John Edward
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Saml. T. (*Glamorgan*)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm.
Hardie, J. Keir (*Merthyr Tyd.*)
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (*Bristl, E*
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope John Deans (*Fife, West*
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, David B. (*Swansea*)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Lambert, George
Law, H. Alex. (*Donegal, W.*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (*Sligo, North*)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*)
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*)
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, South*)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (*Cork*)
O'Brien, Kendal (*Tipperary Mid*
O'Brien, William (*Cork*)
O'Connor, James (*Wicklow W.*)
O'Connor, T. P. (*Liverpool*)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (*Mayo, N.*)
O'Kelly, James (*Roscommon, N.*
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, Sir Charles M (*Durham*
Paulton, James Mellor
Perks, Robert William
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (*Waterford*)
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighsh.*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (*Northants*
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glamorgan, E.*)
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thomas, F. Freeman- (*Hastings*
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W.R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tully, Jasper
Walton, John Lawson, (*Leeds, S.*
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*)
White, George (*Norfolk*)
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whiteley, George (*York, W.R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Williams, Osmond (*Merioneth*)
Wilson, Fred W. (*Norfolk, Mid.*)
Woodhouse, Sir J T (*Huddersf'd*
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Dr. Macnamara and Mr. Kearley.

NOES.

Aird, Sir John
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.

Beckett, Ernest William
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, T. G. (*King's Lynn*)
Brown, Sir Alx. H. (*Shropsh.*)
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt Hn J A (*Glasg.*)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain,Rt.Hn.J A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig,Chas.Curtis(*Antrim,S.*)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, H. Shepherd (*Bolton*)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Jos. C.
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gibbs,HnA.G.H(*City of Lond*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon,Hn.J.E.(*Elgin & Nrn*
Gordon,Maj Evans-(*Tr. Hmlts*
Gore,Hn.G.R.C.Ormsby(*Salop*
Gore, Hn. S. F.Ormsby- (*Linc*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Greene,Sir E.W.(*Bury St. Ed.*
Greene, W. Raymond- (*Cambs*
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld.G.(*Midx*
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robt. Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashfd*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir Alexander
Hobhouse,Rt.Hn.H.(*Sm'rs't,E*
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (*Sheff., B'tside*)
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hutton, John (*Yorks, N.R.*)
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood
Kemp, George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.(*Salop*
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawson, John Grant
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W.(*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
M'Arthur, Charles(*Liverpool*)
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Maxwell,WJH.(*Dumfriesshire*
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mitchell, William
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (*Hants*)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray,RtHn.A.Graham(*Bute*
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley,Hn.M.W.(*Stalybridge*)
Ritchie,Rt.Hn.Chas.Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild,Hon.LionelWalter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys,Lieut.-Col.Thos.Myles
Seely,Maj.J.E.B.(*IsleofWight*
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M.H.(*Renfrew*
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Smith,AbelH.(*Hertford,East*)
Smith,H.C(*North'mb.Tyneside*
Smith,JamesParker(*Lanarks.*
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*)
Stanley,Hn.Arthur(*Ormskirk*)
Stanley,EdwardJas.(*Somerset*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphrey Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot,RtHn.JG.(*Oxf'd. Univ.*
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent,Col.SirC.EH(*Sheffield*
Walker, Col. William Hall
Webb,Colonel William George
Welby,Lt.-Col.A.CE(*Taunton*
Welby,SirCharlesG.E.(*Notts.*)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, Wm.H.(*Yorks.*)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Main Question again proposed.

BRITISH INTERESTS IN CHINA AND PERSIA.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): I rise to move the Amendment standing in my name, in order to draw attention to the urgent necessity for taking adequate measures for the safeguarding and promotion of British commercial and political interests in China, and also in Persia. The necessity for more vigorous action on the part of His Majesty's Government in upholding the commercial interests of the British Empire in China, is clearly shown by the recent statistical commercial report concerning the trade of China which we have received. As compared with 1896, the total foreign trade of China in the year 1901 showed an increase of about £9,000,000, and, notwithstanding this fact, we find that British trade in 1901, as compared with 1896, showed a diminution of no less than 16 per cent. Then again, as regards tonnage, the carrying trade in connection with China amounted to 48,500,000 tons; but whereas in 1896 the British proportion of the carrying trade amounted to no less than 65 per cent., in 1901 it had gone down to 53 per cent.—a diminution of 12 per cent. This is still more serious when we have regard to the fact that whilst we in our carrying trade in the far East are losing ground on the one hand, Germany has between 1896 and 1901 had an increase of 10 per cent., and Japan an increase of 9 per cent. I think these figures clearly show that there does exist great necessity for taking vigorous measures for the upholding and the promotion of our commercial interests in China.

There has recently been concluded a new commercial treaty between Great Britain and China, and on the whole one is bound to say that if that treaty comes into force, and is reasonably carried out, it will prove to be a considerable step in advance as compared with the Treaty of Tientsin under which we have been previously trading in China. But in connection with the new commercial treaty there are two or three considerations which I would like to put before the House, and on which possibly the noble Lord, the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, may be able to give us some further information. Under the existing Treaty as amended by the Protocol of last year, the 5 per cent. *ad valorem* duty on imports was increased to 12½ per cent. by a 7½ per cent. surtax, which duty was also to be charged on goods crossing the land frontiers. The *Likin* under the new treaty is to be abolished. Well, we can all hail that news with satisfaction, though some of us may have some doubts as to whether in reality that will be by any means wholly carried out. It may be that no *Likin* under that name will be levied, but there is a fear—and it is to this point that I draw the attention of the Government—that when we find that the Chinese Government still retain the right to tax salt and opium, and also to levy what is termed in the treaty, a "consumption tax," throughout China, on all goods consumed of Chinese origin, and that they will continue to have native custom houses, there is great danger that by this machinery the duty will still be levied on foreign goods imported into China. I am in doubt whether the provisions of the treaty will prevent such illegal charges. The treaty provides that such cases shall be remitted to a tribunal consisting of a British officer, an official of the Imperial Maritime Customs, and an official of the Chinese Government. My own personal opinion, whatever it may be worth, is that we should have had a stronger guarantee for the carrying out of the new treaty. We know that the Treaty of Tientsin has not been carried out, and that in addition to the 7½ per cent. which was to be the maximum duty, there have been squeezes extorted from all those transmitting goods in the country, and that they have had to pay much more than the treaty allowed. The greatest possible vigilance should be exercised to secure the proper carrying out of the provisions of the treaty, and I am of opinion that we should have made the payment of the surtax of 7½ per cent. conditional on the effective carrying out of the provisions of the treaty.

Now, this treaty, good though it is in many respects, will not come into operation until assent has been given to it by all the other Powers enjoying the Most-Favoured-Nation treatment in connection with trade in China. In any case it will not come into force until January 1904; and I should like the noble Lord the Under Secretary to tell us if His Majesty's Government are aware whether any of these Powers have, up to the present, given their assent to that treaty, and will fall into line in this matter. The position we stand in is this, that we have agreed to give the Chinese 12½ per cent. on goods imported into that country. That is a great advantage to China, but the danger is that whenever other Powers are approached by them seeking their assent to this treaty, some of them will endeavour to extort from China concessions on condition of their giving that consent. Now, I am quite aware that the treaty contains a provision which sets forth that no commercial or political concession shall be given by China to any other foreign Power as a condition of assent to the treaty; but we know from experience how often things are done behind our backs, quite contrary to the understanding arrived at. However, I am bound to say that this treaty does bear evidence of an enormous amount of thought, time, and care expended on its negotiation, and I think we may congratulate the Foreign Office and the gentlemen associated with them in getting through the treaty in so favourable a form. The only question is as to whether it will ever come into force, and whether adequate measures are taken that its provisions will be honestly carried out.

We were told that in 1898 an agreement had been arrived at under which British ships would be able to carry British goods to every riverside town on the great inland waterways. We know that that has been an absolutely dead letter. I am glad to see a certain amount of redress has been obtained by a provision for opening five new Treaty ports. Steamers are to be allowed to take in cargo and passengers at certain of the ports on the Yang-tze and West rivers; and there is also a provision that obstructions to navigation shall be removed in the Canton river, and that the harbour of Canton shall be improved. No provision, however, has been made in regard to the removal of obstructions in the waterway of the Yang-tze, leading up to Chung-King. I am glad to see that the improvement of the Whang-po is to be under the supervision of an International Board, for we have had experience in the north of China, on various rivers, that these improvements have not been sufficiently carried out. Another great advantage of the new treaty, on which I congratulate the Government, is that they have secured that the same duties shall be levied on junks and steamers; and in addition to that, we have also the right to introduce the best appliances for hauling our steamers up the rapids on the Yang-tze river. Altogether in the negotiation in regard to the navigation of the inland waterways, certain progress has been made. On the whole, I trust that the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs will be able to reassure us as to the likelihood of this treaty coming into force, and that His Majesty's Government will exercise all vigilance to see that its provisions are carried out. By the treaty the revenues of the provincial governments are taken away, although there is a provision of some sort to secure to them a share of the sur-tax equal to the revenues they have hitherto been receiving. That provision, however, seems to me to be a little too vague; it is not sufficiently definite, and it is simply to be found in letters appended to the treaty, and not in the body of it. I hope the noble Lord will be able to give us some assurance on that point.

Turning to the question of British trade in China, I wish to refer to railways. We have been told in this House, and through the Government documents, that British concessionaires had secured concessions to the extent of 2,800 miles of railway. Now, China, the greatest and richest Empire on earth, is for the first time being supplied with a system of railways. But what is the position today so far as British investors and manufacturers are concerned? Go where you like in China, Russians, French, Germans, and Belgians are busily engaged in laying down railways, the whole of the railway material and rolling stock for which must be drawn from the countries of the concessionaires, to the exclusion of British manufacturers. And not a single mile of the 2,800 miles of railway granted to British concessionaires has yet been finally ratified, although I am glad to know that one or two concessions appear to be in a fair way to be ratified. I think that the British manufacturers and investors must feel that, somehow or other, they do not receive from the British Government the same support that the Russians, Germans, Belgians, and French receive from their Governments in securing their concessions, and in carrying through their railway enterprises. At any rate, no one can deny that it is a most unfortunate, most disappointing, and most unsatisfactory position for this country, which had always been ahead of all other countries in the world in railway enterprise, and which had now practically no share or lot in the matter. Another point in connection with the railways is that we have not had any assurance of a definite character that all nations shall enjoy the same rights and privileges in regard to railway rates. The ex-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had pointed out the importance of it in his communications with China; but the question is, how far has any agreement been arrived at, and, if an agreement has not been reached, is it being sought for at the present moment?

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): It is in the Treaty of Tientsin.

*MR. J. WALTON: I should much rather it were included in the new treaty, and brought up to date and expressed in a form that would be more applicable to present conditions than is the antiquated Treaty of Tientsin. The very fact that it is in the Tientsin Treaty shows that it ought to have engaged the attention of the Government in negotiating the new treaty, which, I imagine, supersedes the Treaty of Tientsin. The danger is that this provision may fall to the ground. Then there is the question of hindering our commerce with China by having imposed on that country too heavy burdens in the shape of indemnities. I am bound to say that the Government in their despatches have shown that they did not wish to press too hardly on China; it is an unforuntate circumstance, however, that what the Chinese nation is feeling so much now is the great fall in the price of silver, so that instead of 450,000,000 taels being sufficient to pay off the indemnity, it means at least a third more, a result of the fall of the tael from 3s. to 2s. 3d. since the Protocol was signed. The Chinese asked that they should not be required to pay more than 450,000,000 taels. I find from the Blue-book that the German Government understood that the bonds, together with the Sinking Fund and interest, were to be expressed in taels, whereas the British Government said that the bonds should be expressed in sterling, reckoning the tael at 3s. The British Government knew perfectly well that the demands of some of the Powers were extravagant, and they were anxious that the burden should press as lightly as possible on China. Therefore, in view of the fact that the Government adheres to the bonds being expressed in sterling, I would urge that there should be some abatement in the terms.

I wish to know whether Shanghai has been evacuated by all the Foreign Powers; also whether the noble Lord can give us any information as to the important question of the arrest of Chinese in the International Settlement on a warrant issued by the French, countersigned only by the senior Consul, and without a *primâ facie* case having been made out before a mixed court in the International Settlement. I should be glad to know whether a settlement has been arrived at in this matter, because it is manifestly unsatisfactory. The French would not tolerate for a moment the entrance into their settlement of police officers to arrest Chinese, and we should not tolerate it either. There are 250,000 Chinese living in our Shanghai International Settlement, and they should not be subject to arrest without proper examination of the charges against them. Then I would ask the noble Lord if he can give us any further information with reference to the situation at Niuchwang. Has it been handed back to Chinese administration, and are the Customs being collected by the Imperial Maritime Customs officers? I should wish to know whether there is any foundation to the statement that Russia has demanded, and has insisted upon, the appointment of a Russian officer to collect the duties at Niuchwang Custom House. Niuchwang is a treaty port in which Russia has no greater right than the British or any other Power.

Returning to Shanghai, and to the conditions under which it was evacuated, we have another proof of the undesirability of acting too much, at any rate, in concert with Germany in Chinese affairs. The history of our association with Germany in the far East is a most unfortunate one. To have our troops under the command of a German General after we had opened up China to trade, and after we had been the predominant trader there for generations, was, to say the least of it, not satisfactory to British feelings and British patriotism. As an Englishman, I felt ashamed to be allied with the Germans, and to have to stand by and see marauding expeditions in Northern China which destroyed villages without any provocation whatever. But the history of our association with Germany in China is further unsatisfactory in this respect, that when we concluded the Anglo-German Agreement we foolishly, as I think, not only recognised her priority of right in Shangtung, but we admitted her to equal rights with ourselves in the Yang-tse region, which was regarded as our special sphere. The Germans, indeed, call this Agreement the Yangtse Agreement, but, notwithstanding the fact that they had this clear and definite Agreement with us admitting them to equal rights and privileges in the Yangtse region, they thought it necessary to go behind our backs and get another undertaking from the Chinese, which was certainly directed against British interests, if it were specially directed against any interests at all. Under that undertaking China was—

> "Not to grant to any Power special advantages of a political, maritime, military or economic nature, nor to allow the occupation of any other points commanding the river, either above or below Shanghai."

To this our Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs most properly replied—

> "The British Government's objection was that it was an arrangement which would affect not only the economic, but also the political, military and maritime conditions of the region concerned, and it would be binding only upon a limited number of Powers and restricted in its operation to a portion only of the Chinese Dominions."

Subsequently the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that we would not regard ourselves as in any way bound by that arrangement, but unfortunately it still remains a fact that that undertaking has been given by China to Germany, and if China does not observe it Germany will call her to account for any breach of it. Therefore, whether we regard ourselves as bound by it in any way or not, it remains. It is most unsatisfactory that after the manner in which we treated Germans in regard to Shang Tung, as well as admitting her to equal rights and privileges in the Yang-tse region, her statesmen should have thought it fit or necessary to extort an undertaking of this nature behind our backs from the Chinese Government.

In connection with the evacuation of Shanghai, it was very satisfactory to note that our Japanese allies gave us most cordial and complete support in the objections which we raised. The only other point to which I will refer in connection with China has reference to Southern China and to piracy on the West River and Cantonese waters. It appears to me, from all the information that I have received, that a complete patrol by gunboats is required in these waterways. There is still a great deal of piracy, and my information is that our French neighbours are extremely busy in promoting, extending, and making their influence felt in that part of the Chinese Empire. We admit freely that the French have equal rights and privileges with ourselves in Southern China, but, having regard to the importance of our trade and our long association with that part of China, and to our having for generations practically policed these waters, I do not think that the House will agree that the Government should relinquish their position or cease to play the part they have played in the past in ensuring the observance of law and order in China. With reference to Manchuria, the noble Lord in previous debates read extracts from speeches and despatches leading the House to understand that the evacuation of Manchuria by Russia would be complete, and that its administration would be handed back to the Chinese as it existed before the occupation. Well, an agreement was arrived at between Russia and China, but what do we find from the latest reports to hand? That although the Russian troops have been moved from the location they were in a short time ago, there are to be found today, along the railway which Russia has built in Manchuria, not the small number of railway guards which their Agreement provided they should have, but in all probability 30,000 Russian troops. We find that the Chinese arsenals have been despoiled of their guns, and that all the war material and ammunition has been taken away from them, and that the Chinese are not allowed by Russia to have a larger number of Chinese troops in Manchuria than Russia sanctions. What does this amount to? To this: that Russia today is in complete and effective military occupation of the whole of Manchuria, and that the idea of its being returned to Chinese administration as it was before has neither been fulfilled, nor appears likely to be fulfilled. The last communication that we have in the Blue-book is to the effect that Russia adhered unswervingly to her intention, as fairly and frankly declared, to withdraw the troops of occupation, and to restore the province to its position as soon as the state of affairs in Peking and the normal condition of China would permit. I am afraid that the normal condition of China will be very long delayed, and, in fact, is never likely to arrive. But the question of importance to us as a nation is how far our treaty, commercial rights and privileges are going to be upheld throughout Manchuria, and whether any steps have been taken by the Government to protect them. I am sorry to have had to detain the House by asking for this information with regard to China, but some of the questions, at any rate, to which I have referred the House will feel are of very considerable importance.

I am interested in upholding and extending the trade of the British Empire. The same applies to what I shall have to say as to British interests in Persia. The fact is that British trade is diminishing rapidly in Persia. In 1889 Lord Curzon estimated that British trade in Persia amounted to £3,000,000 a year, as compared with Russian trade £2,000,000. But the last estimates we had, the estimates of 1900–01, more than reversed the position, because we find that Russian trade has gone up from £2,000,000 to £4,500,000, and British trade has gone down from £3,000,000 to £2,000,000. That is to say, Russian trade has increased 125 per cent., and British trade has decreased by 33 per cent. That is a most unsatisfactory situation for British traders to have to face. After all, many millions of the people of this country depend upon our foreign trade for a livelihood, and if we have a dwindling trade in China, Persia, and other places, it is no wonder that we have unemployed who cannot get work to do. The *Economist* gives some further statistics. During the first eight months of 1901 our exports from England to Persia amounted to £700,000, but in the first eight months of the following year, 1902, they amounted to only £423,000. One Manchester firm reports a diminution of no less than 80 per cent. in the course of a few years, although they have made every effort to retain it.

With regard to our political relations with Persia and our ancient prestige there, it is a matter for regret that our prestige and influence in Persia to-day has diminished enormously as compared with what it was in the past. Yet Persia is a country capable of being greatly developed. In the past its ancient cities, like Persepolis and Isfahan, had 1,000,000 inhabitants each, and we cannot forget that these regions only require irrigation, and that if that were applied there are potentialities of wealth in them that would astonish us, and would afford room for an enormous development of trade. The traditional policy of this country with regard to Persia is to preserve the integrity and independence of that country. We ask for and wish to have no preferential privileges and rights in Persia. We only desire to have the open door maintained, with equal rights to trade there under the most-favoured-nation Clause; but unfortunately we are handicapped in our trade with Persia.

We did a large trade with North Persia formerly, but after the Treaty of Berlin Russia practically strangled our trade by enforcing large import duties on British goods passing through Russia for sale in Persia. She has closed the Caspian Sea to all ships who do not fly the Russian flag, though we have, on the other hand, in that other practically inland sea, the Persian Gulf, done police work, and yet given all other nations an equal opportunity to trade there along with us. But the result of Russia closing the Caspian Sea to the flags of other nations, and the imposition of heavy import duties on goods passing through her territories for sale in northern Persia, has been that we have lost our trade in northern Persia. Russia has gained trade not only in this way, but also by giving bounties upon goods sold by Russian subjects in Persia, and giving facilities on her railways, etc., for the carriage of Russian merchandise for sale in Persia. She also, as the noble Lord knows, has built, at a cost of nearly half a million, three great highways down into the north of Persia to facilitate trade. Those roads have not been built by private enterprise; to a large extent the cost has been borne by the Russian Government. What has been the result of this policy? That our trade has diminished.

I do not wish to point out how our trade has diminished without endeavouring to show also how in the future our trade may be maintained.

As the Russian Government has employed these means in Northern Persia, so I would urge the importance of the Indian Government, or the British Government, employing the same means to promote British trade in Southern Persia. Regard should be had to the position of Persia in relation to India, that it lies on the borders of India to a large extent, and that its seaboard is adjacent to the seaboard of India. By our supineness in not taking up a proper commercial position in South Persia we shall soon be within measurable distance of finding Russia also dominant on the Persian Gulf. First, by a commercial harbour soon to be turned into a naval base and connected by railway with the Russian Empire. What would then be the position of our Indian Empire? We have always considered that India was virtually protected by the Great North-Western mountainous frontier, but with Russia on the Persian Gulf they would have turned the flank of our North-Western mountainous frontier, and the natives of India would have to find millions of money for increased defensive forces. We are the trustees of that Empire, and the problem of safeguarding it is one of the first importance, and one to which the Government ought to address themselves without a day's delay. No doubt the Government may say we are not prepared to risk money in foreign countries; but what about the Indian Government? Will any one tell me that when the British and Indian Governments refused to guarantee the two and a-half million loan to Persia in 1900 they were not committing a suicidal act with regard to the commercial and political interests of this country and of India? The Government of India had better have guaranteed ten times two and a half millions than have had the impecunious Government of Persia handed over to the Russians. We are told that the security for the loan was not satisfactory, but Persia has since obtained another loan of one and a quarter millions from Russia, and two-thirds of the Customs receipts cover both interest and redemption of principal on both loans.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.)

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Main Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr Gretton.*)

Main Question again proposed: Debate resumed.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON: When the House adjourned I was referring to the necessity of safeguarding our Indian Empire by taking adequate means for upholding the integrity and independence of Persia. And in this relation, having regard to the much greater importance to our Indian Empire of the Persian question, it seems to me it might be by no means undesirable that the affairs of Persia should be undertaken rather by the Government of India than by the Foreign Office of this country, partly because of the nearness of Persia to India, and therefore India would have a much better knowledge of everything that was happening in Persia than it was possible for the British Foreign Office to have. With regard to the question of British interests in Persia and the Persian Gulf, it was with satisfaction that I heard the noble Lord the Under Secretary last January say, as an announcement of the policy of the Government—

> "There is no change in the attitude maintained by the British Government in the affairs of the Persian Gulf. Our position in the Persian Gulf, both commercially and politically, one was of a very special character and His Majesty's Government had always considered that the ascendancy of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf was the foundation of British policy. This was not merely a statement of theory; it was a statement of fact. Our trade interests there far exceeded those of any other country. Our recognised maritime supremacy secured our political ascendancy."

And I am glad to be able to quote another high authority as to the importance of our maintaining our ascendancy, and that is our present Viceroy of India, who wrote in 1892:—

> "I should regard the concession of a port upon the Persian Gulf to Russia by any Power as a deliberate insult to Great Britain, as a wanton rupture of the *status-quo*, and as an intentional provocation to war; and I should impeach the British Minister, who was guilty of acquiescing in such a surrender as a traitor to his country."

I am glad to say the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State, after his statement of last January which I read to the House, will stand in little danger of impeachment by the Viceroy of India in this matter. But the question we have seriously to consider is, how we are to maintain our commercial position in Southern Persia, and to maintain the *status quo* throughout Persia? With regard to our commercial interest in Southern Persia, I am glad to find they are in a more favourable position than in Northern Persia. The predominance of British ships in the Persian Gulf in 1900 was that of 766,000 tons out of a total tonnage of 960,000, or 90 per cent.; but we are threatened with rivalry and competition on the part of Russia. She has agreed to subsidise a line of steamers from Russia to the Persian Gulf, in order to develop her trade there. The system of bounties to steamers is, of course, objectionable to us, but we have to face the fact of this increased and keen competition on the part of Russia.

To promote British trade in South Persia, it appears to me necessary for the British or Indian Government to take precisely the same steps as the Russian Government have taken in the North. The British or Indian Government should assist British enterprise by the construction of roads from the Persian Gulf up into Southern Persia in order to develop British trade. One route requiring improvement is by the Karun River, and from Ahwaz, via the Bakhtiari country to Ispahan, and another should be made from Baadar Abbas via Yezd and Kerman to Ispahan, and another from Kum to Ispahan, with connecting roads from Kermanshah and Sultanabad. There should be from the Foreign Office or the Indian Government some subsidies given for this purpose. A nominal subsidy is given to one trade route, but I think it would have been much better had advantage been taken of the presence of the Shah in this country to present him with the Garter, and the expense of the Mission sent to Persia for that purpose could these have been devoted to facilitating our Persian trade. It is a matter of satisfaction that the Quetta-Nushki railway is already under construction. A keen interest is taken by the Viceroy of India in the development of that route. The trade there has developed most satisfactorily. In five and a half years it has risen from five lacs to sixteen lacs a year, and I should be glad to know from the Under Secretary that the interference by Russians with British caravans going by the Quetta-Nushki route to Persia has ceased, and that there is now no hindrance to the free trade of our Indian subjects, on that route. In addition to obtaining the necessary concessions from Persia for the construction of these roads, there should undoubtedly be obtained the right to construct railways along the line of these commercial highways.

One most objectionable feature in connection with the Persian situation today is the fact that in connection with the loans which Russia has made to Persia, she has imposed conditions which are unfair and unequal, as affecting other nations. As a condition of her loans, she has compelled Persia to bind herself not to borrow money from any foreign Power until 1912. The security for the Russian loans expressly excepts the inclusion of Customs receipts at Persian Gulf Ports and Faristan. I hold that Russia, being a party along with us to repeated declarations of our respective policies, and those policies being identical—namely, that the integrity and independence of Persia should be maintained, we should not tolerate any interference on Russia's part with the right of British banks and British subjects to make a loan to Persia on the security of the Customs receipts that are not pledged to Russia.

Russia has also debarred Persia from granting concessions for building railways until 1912, and the reason of her doing so is obvious. She is engaged with her great Trans-Caspian Railway, and it is not convenient at present to push railways in Persia, and, therefore, she has debarred Persia from granting any concessions. But I hold we have an equal right with Russia to lay railways in Persia, and we ought not to be bound by any conditions imposed by Russia when making a loan which will prevent our doing so. We should maintain for this Empire rights to build roads or lay down railways in Persia equal to those enjoyed by any other Power. Reverting now to the new commercial treaty made between Russia and Persia; we are now trading under the Most-Favoured-Nation clause with Persia, but under the new treaty between Russia and Persia there has been an attempt to impose higher import duties on products coming from the British Empire than on products sent from Russia. Every nation now pays a 5 per cent. *ad valorem* duty on imports into Persia, but in the case of tea we find under the new treaty a duty of 100 per cent. is fixed. On Manchester cotton goods the import duty has been raised 4 per cent. I do not know whether His Majesty's Government has yet received a copy of the Treaty, but if they have, I hope the House will be informed to-night how far it operates against our trade and in favour of Russian trade. The bulk of the tea which goes to Persia comes from the British Empire, and such an increase must greatly cripple our trade with Persia in tea. I hope we shall have from the noble Lord to-night a satisfactory statement that British trade will be protected, and that we shall not only enjoy the Most-Favoured-Nation terms, but that we shall not be subjected to additional import duties on products we send to Persia as compared with those levied, our products sent by other nations. I raised this question in January last year,† and the Government made a sympathetic reply on that occasion. I then had the honour to have my Amendment seconded by the noble Lord the Under Secretary for India, and I can only hope that now, when in office, he may hold the same open and enlightened views he held then; and that we shall have from him great assistance in upholding British interests in Persia. What I have to complain of is that words have not been followed by deeds. Although the Under Secretary of State's statements have given satisfaction, they have not been followed by any action on the part of the Government. I should desire to have to-night from the noble Lord some assurance that the Government's policy is to be an active policy, though not of an aggressive character; a policy of firmly promoting and upholding British commercial and political interests by the insistence upon our full political and commercial rights.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid): In rising to second the Amendment moved by my hon. friend, I only desire to say a few words. I think he has done good service in bringing to the notice of the House the affairs of these countries. So far as the Amendment is concerned, it is one with which the House will cordially agree, though probably great difference of opinion will arise as to what is the best method of promoting our interests in these countries. Hitherto we find there has been a tendency on the part of the Government to try and make political capital out of some of these events with regard to China. This was apparent when Russia got possession of Port Arthur. There was no need to make any apology for allowing Russia to take possession of Port Arthur. It is what we should have done, in spite of all resistance, if we had made a railway down to it of our own; but the Government then told us that, in order to equalise the matter, they had acquired Wei-hai-wei, which we were told was a much superior place. Now we find, after all the money that has been spent upon it, it is of no use, but is merely a health resort. It is injudicious to try and make political capital out of these matters, because if Russia thought we had the better of her she also would strive for more. When Russia got hold of Port Arthur we are told that we ought to rejoice because the British Government had secured a sphere of influence in the Yang-tze Valley. But not long afterwards the Government came down and said that the Yang-tze Valley was to be the "open door," and that the United States and Germany had agreed to it. That means that we have no advantage whatever. Of course the United States and Germany would agree to the open door, because we have everything to lose, and they have everything to gain by it.

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† See (4) *Debates*, ci., 574.

How has the matter worked with regard to Shanghai? At one time there was a little difficulty about the landing of troops. The House has not sufficiently considered that Shanghai is not a British port at all. It is a treaty port, and every other nation has the same right there as we have. Consequently, when we landed troops at Shanghai for the protection of British interests, Germany, Japan, and every other country landed troops also, and they were only withdrawn on the condition that the Chinese Government should not grant any special advantages to this country. German trade in the Yang-tze Valley has increased from 2 per cent. to 17 per cent. of the total, while ours has correspondingly fallen, while everybody knows the enormous advance the Germans have made in Shanghai. Military prestige is very important in China, but where were our forces at the time of the insurrection? We had to apply to India for Indian troops, and even then we were at the bottom of the scale as regards numbers. Now that the British Army is relieved, the Government should take care that nothing is done to lower our military prestige in these quarters. It is all very well to talk about pressure being brought to bear on the Chinese Government. It is undoubtedly a weak Government, but it is to the interest of the European Powers to keep up its prestige, because you have at any rate a Government with which you can deal.

The missionaries are the great difficulty with regard to disturbances in China. The Chinese have no objection whatever to missionaries preaching the Christian religion in China. The lives of missionaries would be as safe there as anywhere in the world, were it not for the fact that they take the part of their supposed converts in regard to their relations with the civil power, and interfere in matters which really concern the civil government, and thereby come into collision with the authorities. I hope the Under Secretary of State will take this matter into consideration, and that the Government will instruct the missionaries to restrict themselves to matters of religion, and not to intervene in the matter of civil rights. You cannot turn Russia out of Manchuria. Past events have shown that such a thing as a rising is possible in China, and Russia is justified in putting an armed force there to protect her railways. She will probably be as unwilling to leave Manchuria as we are to evacuate Egypt. Russia cannot annex Manchuria; the population would be sufficient to prevent her conquering by force; but she may make Manchuria prosperous, and thereby acquire such an influence over the people as to give her a great hold. As to Niuchwang, that port is doomed. It was of importance before the construction of the Manchurian railway, but it is of little importance now.

The Government should awaken to the importance of having a speedier communication with China by the sea route. The mail route by the Siberian railway will probably reach Peking in fourteen days, and Shanghai in eighteen, and if we are to maintain our position, it is necessary that we should do all we can to quicken the means of communication. We know that British shipowners enter into rings and combinations, so that the Government will have to ensure not only a speedy route, but also that the rates are not excessive, and that foreign enterprise is not allowed to beat us. I am not surprised at the success of Germany. The German ships are the fastest on the station, and the best equipped; they are always full, while the P. & O. boats are about one-third full. If we lose our prestige in commercial competition, I do not see what the Government can do to restore prosperity to men who throw it away themselves. The activity of the Germans will have its reward, and, so far as the German subsidies are concerned, I think they are an immense advantage to this country, because they ensure us against the high rates charged by British shipowners. I beg to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—at the end of the Question to add the words:

"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that it is essential that adequate measures should be taken for the safeguarding and promotion of the commercial and political interests of the British Empire in both China and Persia."—(*Mr. Joseph Walton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said the history of China was extremely discreditable to this country, but much more discreditable to her allies, especially to Germany. In China, as elsewhere during the last forty years, Germany had been the disturber of the peace, and he should have thought that our experience there would have taught us never again to have anything to do with Germany. That lesson, however, had not been learnt, and we had entered into another adventure with that Power, with even more doubtful results. As to Wei-hai-Wei, that had been admitted to be a little mistake, made by the present Prime Minister during his apprenticeship to foreign affairs in the absence of Lord Salisbury; the mistake had been redressed as far as it could be by giving up the pretence of a naval station, and the sooner it was forgotten the better. The question of Persia was of the utmost importance to this country so long as we held India. Lord Curzon, with that amiable appreciation of everybody which always distinguished him, in his book *Problems of the Far East*, had descanted on the absolute ignorance and incapacity of the House of Commons in regard to foreign affairs. But Lord Curzon had learnt many things since he went to India; he had learnt that the forward policy was a bad one, and would probably be ready to acknowledge now that the calling of attention in the House of Commons to matters connected with Persia was not wholly without advantage. Since Lord Curzon went to India tremendous changes had taken place in and about Persia, and it needed only a look at the map to realise the great importance of Persia to India.

Persia had always been one of the most interesting countries of the East. She had produced some of the greatest poets, some of the finest works of art, and some of the most marvellous manufactures of the East, but she had now reached that stage of decadence that her importance lay rather from the political than the artistic point of view. The importance of maintaining the independence and integrity of Persia had always been recognised. He still believed that as long as England maintained her predominance at sea she would always be more powerful in Persia than any other country. The heart of Persia could be got at through the Persian Gulf, and as long as we held the Arabian Sea, and had access to the Persian Gulf, if it came to a question of force, we should always be the "upper dog" in Persia. But in Persia it was particularly important that meantime we should obtain and retain "influence." Influence meant all sorts of things; in Persia especially it meant money; in short, it meant all that was summed up in the word "prestige." The House of Commons and the country had somehow been led to believe that England and Russia had an engagement to maintain the integrity and independence of Persia. That was not the case. No agreement, no engagement to that effect, existed. The only thing that existed was the expression, on the part of Russia, of "a sincere desire to maintain the independence and integrity of Persia." That desire was expressed in 1834, and nothing else or more, nor had anything else or more been expressed by Russia since then. It was true that, in 1888, Lord Salisbury did speak of an "engagement," but there was no such engagement, and what could have induced Lord Salisbury so to characterise the expression of a desire, he could not imagine. There was no treaty or conventional engagement whatever for the independence and integrity of Persia. That country had been, and was, the sport of diplomatic struggles between those who were endeavouring to secure predominance in Persia; and up to the present, especially lately, Russia had so bested us that even Lord Curzon, were he in the House, would probably be inclined to second the Amendment to the Address.

The ignorance of the House of Commons, arose not from any indisposition on the part of Members to inform themselves if they had the opportunity, but from the reticence and indisposition on the part of Ministers to give information, from the disposition to give information not always understood in the sense in which it was given, and the disposition to use words with great dialectical ability, so that they did not give exactly the impression with which they left the mind of the Under Secretary of State. So great was the preponderance of Russia that she had absolutely forbidden Persia to fly her own flag on the Caspian. The bordering Persian provinces of Ghilan and Mazanderan were almost absolutely Russian in every way, and the whole of Persia was becoming almost entirely under Russian influence. He thought that was largely our own fault. There were other matters. Hon. Members were all aware that foreign potentates were as proud of honours and distinctions as English nobles, and he did think that it was a very great pity when His Majesty the Shah was in this country that he was not accorded the honour which he was believed to desire. The result was that he and his suite went away disappointed and discontented, and went to Russia to make the best arrangement they could. But after the mischief had been done, and his arrangements made with Russia, it was discovered that there was no such objection as had been supposed to giving the Garter to a non-Christian sovereign, and then a special mission was sent to him with the Garter which had been withheld while he was here—sent when it was too late.

As to railways, he believed it was a fact that there was an arrangement between Russia and Persia the practical effect whereof was that no one but a Russian could build railways in Persia. That was a very serious state of things, which ought not to occur in any country where they kept up an Embassy, and where they had, let him say, a most able Ambassador. The fault lay with the Government, and it was a most unfortunate thing that the English had been driven out of Persia as railway makers. As far as the military aspect of the question was concerned, he believed that the command of the sea would enable England to put more men there than Russia and Germany by land.

He came now to the question of trade. He held that trade itself in Persia was a secondary question, but influence went with trade, and influence was created by trade. Where they had British merchants and British interests well established, there they were likely to have more influence. As to trade with Persia, British trade had undoubtedly declined in the most alarming manner, and Russian trade had as greatly increased. He had asked the noble Lord on a former occasion if there was a commercial treaty between Russia and Persia, and he replied that he knew nothing about it at that time; he trusted he knew more about the matter now. He was told that it was one of the most tricky treaties that ever was made. It professed to give no more favoured treatment for Russian than English goods, but in fact all the favouritism was for Russia and none for England. There had been recently some strange and ominous Consular appointments, there had been also an importation of Belgian Custom-House officers, but no English; for in these days in Persia everything went to somebody else and never to a Briton. If a Russian could not be got a Belgian was appointed, and if they could not get a Belgian he supposed they would get a Venezuelan, but never an Englishman. He had drawn attention to these facts from time to time, and had asked questions as to the effect of this treaty on British trade; and recently it was acknowledged as fully as one expected an Under Secretary to acknowledge it, that this treaty was likely to do some injury to British trade, and the noble Lord was good enough to say that this matter was receiving and would receive the attention of the Government. He wanted to know how far that attention had gone. What had His Majesty's Government done in answer to this Russian commercial treaty? Had they done anything? Had they made a treaty or come to any agreement with Persia to be put upon the same terms as Russia, had they got a treaty as cleverly drawn as the Russian treaty, or had they been amused with mere nothings?

He wished to know if the Government had submitted to the unfavourable position in which that treaty had placed English goods. He had been assured that the duties placed upon Indian tea were such as to make it impossible to go on importing that tea into Persia. If that were true, so great was the importance of the trade in Indian tea that it would be a most serious matter. The Persians were very great tea drinkers, and if Indian tea was practically prohibited and entirely replaced by Russian tea that was very serious. He wanted to know what the Government had done. Had the noble Lord got a copy of the Russian commercial treaty, and would he lay it on the Table? And, secondly, what steps was the Government taking in order to secure the trade between India and Persia and between Great Britain and Persia? Had they taken any steps, and if they had, what were they? Those were the two special questions he wished to ask. He thought the noble Lord must feel that under the circumstances which had arisen now and promised to arise, and in view of the decrease of British trade and the corresponding decrease of British influence, that it was neither possible nor desirable that he should keep silent upon these points.

*MR. KESWICK (Surrey, Epsom) said the statements which were constantly being made as to the decline of our trade with the East were not entirely correct. Statistics proved that the volume of our commerce with the Far East had not diminished; but what had happened was that we had not been able to maintain that percentage of the entire trade—the enormous increase of which was one of the features of recent times—which was ours before foreign competition began. The opening of the Suez Canal, the introduction of telegraphy, the general advancement in the construction of steam-ships, the improvements in machinery, and above all, the extension to the Continent of Europe of the power of producing machinery which in the earlier stages the genius of British engineers had made almost exclusively English, had enabled Continental Powers and nations to take a share in a trade with which they were previously unacquainted. Our seafaring instincts had led us to extend our trade into the far regions of the earth, because we were the first to grasp what those foreign countries required, and for a long period we possessed the trade of those countries. But with the opening of the Suez Canal there was an altered state of things. The great position which London occupied when goods had to be brought round by the Cape of Good Hope was entirely changed by the opening of the Suez Canal, and London was no longer the great depôt from which the whole of Europe drew its supplies.

He did not believe that our people were less enterprising, less energetic, or less desirous of accumulating fortunes than our forefathers; nor did he think that there had been any falling off in the desire of the mercantile community to promote the interests of the country while advancing their own individual interests. He regarded the recent commercial treaty between this country and China as most valuable in the interests of our trade. It was a treaty which had been formulated with great skill, evidently with immense patience, and an extraordinary amount of study of every feature connected with it, and every obstacle to the carrying out of the intentions of the parties to the treaty had been as far as practicable, guarded against.

Reference had been made to native opium and salt not being included, but there were many other productions which could not possibly be included in the tariff connected with an independent country which collected its own taxes and was responsible for its own administration. It was absolutely impossible for any one Power to dictate to China what it should do in connection with its own native trade. As to Wei-hai-wei, he should deeply deplore its abandonment, for he regarded it as a most important position. He did not mean that money should be spent upon it immediately, but it was well to possess it, and to be able to make it an important naval or military station at any time, if necessary. Touching Persia, a country in which he took a great deal of interest, both commercially and otherwise, he suggested the great importance of the Government devoting extreme attention to our position there. There was a danger, and it was this. The people were intelligent, and the country only required good government in order to go ahead, but the Government of Persia was not equal to its duties and responsibilities, and a powerful Government like that of Russia could undoubtedly take advantage of the situation. It therefore became, in their own interest, a matter of extreme importance that great vigilance should be observed in matters affecting British influences and commercial interests in Persia.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): I am sure the House and the Government ought to be very grateful to my hon. friend who has just sat down, because, speaking as he does from a peculiar position of knowledge and experience of trade in the Far East, he has been able to inform the House both that the recent commercial treaty with China has met with the approval of himself and the commercial community, and also that the position of our trade in China is not so gloomy as some hon. Members would have us believe. Before I deal with China, if hon. Members will allow me, I will address myself to the other part of his Motion and deal with the affairs of Persia. Reference has been made to the difficulty which the Government find in opposing the text of this Amendment to the Address which the hon. Member has put upon the Paper. No doubt he asserts very little more than the truth, but I think the House is very well aware that it is the duty of a Government to resist an Amendment to the Address. I remember that last year when a similar Amendment was moved to the Address by a friend of the Government, we were equally bound to resist it upon that occasion. There is no change in our policy in Persia. I do not quite know why the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment thought it necessary to challenge our policy in Persia.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: Because it is passive instead of active.

LORD CRANBORNE: So far as I am able to judge passing events, the circumstances have not changed in Persia to any great extent from the time when I spoke last year. We hold to the declarations I then made on behalf of His Majesty's Government. We see no reason whatever why our interests and those of Russia should clash in Central Asia. The field is wide. The objects which we severally have in view are quite sufficient to occupy all the energies we can devote to them. There appears to be no reason in the world why Russia and ourselves should get in one another's way. But I agree with my hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn that our position in regard to Persia is one of great strain. My hon. friend made a notable admission as coming from so candid a critic of the Government, for he pointed out that after all the position which our maritime ascendency gave us in the Gulf was so great that we might consider with comparative calmness the position of any other Power in those regions. If our position is materially strong, so is it strong by treaty. My hon. friend tried to persuade the House just now that the exchange of Notes under which, as we claim, Russia and Great Britain have mutually agreed to respect the integrity of Persia were so many cobwebs, that they had no value and no validity whatever, and that, as a matter of fact, from his inspection of the words of the text of these notes they do not amount to an engagement at all.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: They amount to a sincere desire and no more.

*LORD CRANBORNE: My hon. friend is an authority on many things; in fact there is hardly anything on which the House would not be prepared to believe him an authority; but I do not think he is an authority on diplomatic English.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Or French?

*LORD CRANBORNE: Well, or even diplomatic French, and I do say that all those who are experts in the science of diplomacy have recognised, and always must recognise, that the terms of the Notes which were exchanged between Great Britain and Russia amount to a mutual engagement to respect the integrity of Persia. As far as I know, the Russian Government, like our own, have never attempted or desired to repudiate the interpretation which has continually been placed upon those Notes—the interpretation which was placed by the late Foreign Secretary of this country, placed by the representatives of the Government in this House on more than one occasion in the most public manner possible, and never called in question until my hon. friend spoke. Apart from that general treaty position, we have a strong case. My hon. friend, for example, spoke of the railway situation in Persia. It is true that the Russians have certain rights in respect of railway construction in Persia; so have we. We have the right, when railways are constructed in the north of Persia, to construct a railway in the south.

I turn to another part of Persia—the eastern frontier. Last year I reminded the House and the country that we thought it to be our duty to maintain our position in various parts of Persia, and especially among others in those provinces which border on our own frontier. Any one who has watched recent events, will recognise that the presence of a certain Commission which has been sent to that part of the world has demonstrated, if it required demonstration, that our power and position must be seriously reckoned with on the south-eastern frontier of Persia. In the provinces which border on the Persian Gulf, in the same way we have treaty rights of great importance; for we have the engagements of the Persian Government not to pledge the Customs of southern Persia. It will be seen that, when we come to examine the subject, in many directions our position is very strong. My hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn has referred to our commercial policy. We are pursuing in Persia, as we do everywhere else, a policy of commercial development. But before I say a word upon that, I must refer to the observations of my hon. friend and others in respect to the Russian commercial treaty with Persia. There is no doubt of the fact that there is a commercial treaty between Russia and Persia, and I am afraid that that treaty is so constructed as more or less to hamper the trade of the British Empire with Persia. We took very serious note of that. We have made strong observations to the Persian Government, and we have given certain instructions to our representative at Teheran. On the present occasion I am not going further; but I hope within a very short time to make a fuller statement as to the result of these representations and instructions than I can do at the present moment.

The hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment spoke of roads. I think the road of which he spoke is really in working order. Besides that, there is an important concession, which has hitherto been held by the Imperial Bank of Persia, with which I know the hon. Gentleman is familiar; well that has entered, as we hope, on a new chapter, and it is anticipated that the concession will be fruitful before long. There are certain Customs difficulties which have arisen on the Karun river attracting some attention. Our diplomacy, I am glad to say, has been able to overcome those obstacles, and, to a large extent, the old state of things under which it has not been necessary to break bulk as complained of by the merchants has been re-established. Lastly, our Government have thought it right to despatch a commercial mission to Persia, which has for its object the duty of investigating the commercial possibilities of Persia and the openings which the Persian market, properly studied, might be able to afford for the development of British trade. The hon. Gentleman has called that a passive policy. How much does the hon. Member expect the Government to do in twelve months? I do not say it is a hasty policy, but it is certainly not a passive policy. The House may believe me that in dealing with the very delicate questions which undoubtedly present themselves to us in Persia, a hasty policy would be a profound mistake. A firm, active, moderate, temperate policy, and, above all, not a hasty policy, is that which His Majesty's Government desire to pursue.

I turn to the other branch of the hon. Member's Amendment which deals with China. I am sure he will forgive me if I do not go back right to the beginning. I know that it is very difficult for an hon. Gentleman who, like himself, is familiar with Chinese questions, to abstain from carrying the House back to the earlier controversies in which we have been engaged in that country. Things are not so bad as the hon. Member has stated.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: I quoted your own statistics.

*LORD CRANBORNE: Yes, but the hon. Gentleman carefully selected those statistics—naturally enough. There is, however, the broad fact that during the troubles in China in the last few years the proportion of British trade to other trade has hardly diminished at all. Upon the whole, the bulk of trade has greatly increased. I do not mean to say that other countries have not also had their share in the improvement of trade. The hon. Member for Lanark said that while formerly the German trade at Shanghai had been 3 per cent., it was now 17 per cent. of the whole. But did the hon. Member really expect that the trade of a great commercial country like Germany would permanently remain at the figure of 3 per cent.? Does the hon. Member think it unreasonable, or anything of which this country ought to be greatly afraid, if, with all the energy and skill which German commercial interests can put forward, they have increased their trade during the last few years from 3 to 17 per cent.? I should think that our trade at Shanghai was probably well over 50 per cent. As to the commercial treaty, I do not propose to go into wearisome details. Our reliance upon it depends on the treaty's own merits It's most important clause is, of course, not effective until the other Powers accept a similar provision with China. I mean the clause which abolishes the oppressive inland taxation. But what we rely upon is that other commercial Powers will, like ourselves, be convinced, as no doubt they will be convinced, of the superiority of the improvement which China has been induced to accept in its fiscal policy, and that, being so convinced, other Powers will themselves accept a similar provision.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON: Have any of the Powers accepted it?

*LORD CRANBORNE: No, Sir; I do not think that any other Power has as yet accepted the commercial treaty. As to the position at Niuchwang, the Russian Government has not at present altogether removed their authority from Niuchwang. But they have promised to do so, and the period by which they engaged to evacuate that part of Manchuria to which Niuchwang belongs does not expire until the middle of April, so that it would be premature to make any observations on their continued position there at present. I may remark that the Imperial Customs at Niuchwang are under Sir Robert Hart, and the native Customs are collected by men under the same authority; and therefore, there is no very great ground of complaint for the position which now exists at Niuchwang. I have nothing to report about the railway siding at Tientsin. As the hon. Member is aware, the question was referred to arbitration, and the award has not yet been received. As to Shanghai, I do not think we have any reason to be displeased with what has taken place in regard to the evacuation of Shanghai about the end of last year. We did not agree in that respect, it is perfectly true, with the German Government. Our belief in the open door is deeply founded, but it does not date from the moment when it was thought advisable to evacuate Shanghai. It dated from long before that; and we saw no reason at all why the withdrawal of our troops from Shanghai should be made the occasion of any fresh declaration on the subject. Such a declaration had the appearance, as Lord Lansdowne wrote, of being directed against one Power only, and that Power Great Britain.

The hon. Member for Barnsley has said the that German Government made certain arrangements with the Government of China, and that those arrangements remained, inspite of the attitude we adopted. Well, we do not recognise those arrangements, and it will be seen from the Blue-book that the Chinese Government themselves assure us that they will allow nothing that had passed to prejudice the rights of Great Britain in the Yang-tze Valley. So that if we differ from Germany, as Powers do differ from time to time, we have no reason to be in any way displeased with the results of circumstances as they turned out in November of last year.

As to the question of Consular jurisdiction in Shanghai, I am glad to say that a *modus vivendi* has been agreed upon between the Powers. I hesitate to give it to the House at such an hour of the night, because it is rather a complicated arrangement, and it will be better to communicate the terms by way of answer to a Question. But the general effect of it is this. In any criminal prosecution where the prosecutor and defendant are both Chinese, the trial will take place in the concession where the crime was committed. Where the defendant is Chinese and the prosecutor is a foreigner, then the trial will take place in the concession, either international or foreign, to which the foreigner belonged. There is every reason to hope that, when the proper regulations for carrying out the arrangements have been agreed to, a way out of the difficulty will have been found.

As to the indemnity, I have already told the House on more than one occasion that His Majesty's Government cannot admit that the indemnity was anything but a gold debt. It was definitely arranged to be so in the protocol, and we must insist that it should be recognised by the Chinese Government as a gold debt. But we do sympathise with the difficulties which the great fall in silver has thrown upon the Chinese Government, and, as I have before told the House, we shall be very glad if, in some way or other, some mitigation—as, for example, some postponement of the payments which are due—can be given to China in order to assist her to meet her difficulties. But the one concession which we will not make is to admit that the debt, which it was agreed should be a gold debt, should become a silver debt.

There is only one other matter to which reference has been made—the position of Wei-hai-wei. As my hon. friend has pointed out, we have not abandoned Wei-hai-wei. It is true that for the moment we have not continued to treat it as a naval base; but I do not think the House should conclude that we will never treat it as a naval base. I do not say that we shall never treat Wei-hai-wei as a naval base. Circumstances may alter, and we may find it necessary in the future to alter the provisional decision that has been come to. But my reply to the criticisms of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and my hon. friend behind me, is that Wei-hai-wei is no longer so necessary to us as it formerly was. And the reason for that is that owing to the policy of His Majesty's Government we have enormously strengthened our position in China by the Japanese agreement, and that we are in a situation now, at least, which makes it quite possible, at any rate temporarily, to dispense with Wei-hai-wei as a naval base. Under these circumstances I think that the House will recognise that the taunts levelled against the Government in respect to this matter are undeserved. We have attempted in our Chinese policy, in the same spirit as I have tried to describe our policy in Persia, to study the interests of this country with moderation and firmness; and we believe that, on the whole, the Government have deserved and will receive the support of the House and the country.

*MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.): I must be allowed to say that a more unsatisfactory reply to great and wide-reaching questions of foreign affairs I have never heard than that which has fallen from the noble Lord. The same questions have been previously put by my hon. friend beside me, by the hon. Member for King's Lynn, and by myself, and precisely the same answers, couched almost in the same words, have been made by the noble Lord. In the discussion of foreign affairs in this House we are really like the countryman with the claret, we do not get any " forrarder." The defence which the noble Lord put forward is ludicrous. He says that our policy has not been hasty. Good heavens! has anybody ever charged the present Government with being hasty in their foreign policy, except perhaps where Germany is concerned? The noble Lord says that there has been no change in our policy in Persia. That is precisely what everybody complains of; and no more fatal condemnation could have come from the Opposition side of the House. The noble Lord says in all we have done in Persia there is nothing hostile to Russia. We wish that there had been something hostile or friendly to Russia in it. We wish that there had been anything in regard to Russia rather than this constant dead level of shilly-shally, and constant drift, with no possibility of knowing where this country stands really until we see it in black and white, in a treaty between Russia and some other nation to our disadvantage. The noble Lord gets behind an exchange of Notes, which dates from 1838 or 1839. He says the agreement in this exchange of Notes was never called in question. He means that Russia had never called it in question. Why should Russia call it in question?

She has got the right to build railways and has obtained concessions to build a road to the capital of Persia itself on which she will run motor cars. Our position, says the noble Lord, is very strong! Is it respectful to this House, after all that has taken place in Persia, to simply fob us off with the remark that our position in Persia is very strong, when every human being outside the Treasury Bench, and when even one noble Lord on the Treasury Bench, who has only recently come there, knows that it is very weak?

LORD CRANBORNE: I was only repeating, with cordial assent, what the hon. Member for King's Lynn has just said.

*MR. NORMAN: I may be very dense and obtuse, but I did not gather that there was any cordial agreement between the hon. Member for King's Lynn and the noble Lord. The noble Lord admits frankly that this Commercial Treaty between Persia and Russia hampers our trade seriously, but then what have we done? We have taken a strong note of it! We have been taking strong notes in every part of the world ever since this Government came into power, and I think that we are likely to keep on doing so, and not likely to do anything more. The hon. Gentleman who introduced this discussion drew a dismal picture of Russia coming down to the Persian Gulf. I find myself in a small minority in this House on this question, but I hope it is a growing one. The hon. Member spoke of the terrible things that would happen when Russia got down to the Persian Gulf. Well, that is, of course, as may be. Russia coming down to the Persian Gulf would be a matter of arrangement. It might possibly be a matter of taking strong note of it, but it ought to be also a matter of bargain, to settle under what conditions and circumstances Russia would come down there. But without going into that, I would repeat my opinion, and that of other people, that our relations with Russia should be conducted face to face in frank, direct arguments and diplomatic discussion; and that we should tell Russia what is our irreducible minimum of national and international necessity, and that we should learn from her what is her irreducible minimum, and see in what way we could harmonise these two, and seek to prove in reality, and not leave it in the empty words of the Prime Minister, that there is room enough in Asia for both nations. The Government is simply saying to Russia, "Hands off, hands off," and getting no "forrarder"; and next Russia will be there, and the noble Lord will take a strong note! The hon. Member for King's Lynn says that no matter who is inland in Persia, we shall always be the "upper dog" there if we have command of the sea. I can only say that anyone who believes that will believe anything. I think that is a most mistaken view, and that whoever gets possession of Persia by land, and builds railways, will gain the trade of Persia.

I pass for a moment to the question of the indemnity to be paid by China. I am extremely sorry, and I think every friend of China must have been extremely sorry, and anyone who has studied the financial question of the Far East, must be very sorry to hear the extremely unsympathetic, and, if I may say so, empty form of words with which the noble Lord dismissed the subject of indemnity. The schedules in which the conditions of the indemnity were first laid down specified taels. Now, a tael is a piece of silver. It is not a figure of varying value, as we are accustomed to look at values in a newspaper. It is an actual, solid thing, and when a Chinaman has got to pay so many taels it is so many taels of solid silver. At the time the indemnity was fixed the gold price of the tael was 3s. It is now 2s. 3d., and every penny of the fall in the price of silver means from 13 to 15 millions of taels extra payment of indemnity by the Chinese Government. I ask, could anything be more unfair to them? This fall in the price of silver has followed from causes with which the Chinese Government have had nothing to do. As an Englishman, I am ashamed that the only Government in the world which has been enlightened enough to see the cruelty and injustice of such an arrangement is the Government of the United States. I was hopeful that our own Government would have seen it first. It must be remembered that the people who really pay these millions of taels are not the Chinese Government, but the population of China. That population has already 90,000,000 of taels extra to pay. Not only that, there is that peculiar thing in China called the "squeeze," because the collection of the indemnity will go down through official after official to the people whose unit is not a tael, or a franc, but a very small debased coin called a "cash." When the lowest collector of all comes to the poor masses of the people, do you suppose that he will collect only the sum required by the Government? Not at all; he will insist on taking not one "cash," but ten "cash," and he will say that it is all the fault of the wretched foreigners. Everybody who knows China will tell you that that is what will happen; and given a bad spring, a dry season, and other concomitant causes, I do not hesitate to say that we shall have a vastly greater anti-foreign rising in China than that which was recently put down with so little credit, but with so much difficulty.

But there is another matter more important than any of those I have mentioned, and that is the treaty negotiated by Sir James Mackay. I desire to speak with all due respect of Sir James Mackay, who has formerly rendered great services in Imperial financial negotiations; but I do not think that that gentleman knew very much about China. It is one characteristic of the present Government that when they send someone to China, they send a man who has not had any experience of the country. At any rate, Sir James Mackay got his treaty signed, but it was signed by some Chinese officials—I am speaking within my own knowledge, so far as it can be within the knowledge of anybody who was not on the spot at the time—because they knew that it was never going to be ratified. The *Likin* or inland taxation of China is a vested interest compared with which all the vested interests in a country like this are things that could be swept away by a breeze. To abolish *Likin* in China would be nothing less than a revolution. I do not think you can find anyone, except perhaps the hon. Member for Epsom, who believes in the reality of this treaty negotiated by Sir James Mackay.

LORD CRANBORNE: I think the hon. Gentleman must be aware that the Government were in close contact with the representatives of the commercial interests and with all classes who do business with China; and so far as I know, the treaty was received with universal approval by everyone.

*MR. NORMAN: I happen to know certain commercial men in England who are in constant touch with China, and they do not believe in the treaty. But there are Chambers of Commerce which know much more about China than the Chambers of Commerce in this country. The Shanghai Chamber of Commerce may be said to know a little more about the prospects of the treaty than any Chamber of Commerce here, and I believe that Chamber expressed an adverse opinion to the treaty by a majority of seven. I gather that the noble Lord was not aware of that, and his quotation in favour of English opinion is not conclusive on this matter. Is the noble Lord also aware that a large number of Chambers of Commerce in the United States have passed resolutions urging the American Government not to assent to these new relations with China on this subject; and is he aware that the Japanese Government are entirely opposed to this treaty? If not, he will soon become aware of these facts. Is he aware that quite recently—for so I am informed by commercial men who are in a position to know — upwards of £3,000,000 worth of goods have been sent out to Shanghai, Hankow, Tientsin, and other places in China? Does he think that these orders would have been sent out if 7½ per cent. import duty was going to be added, with entire uncertainty about *Likin?* I should be very glad indeed if the *Likin* could be abolished in China, and I range myself in that respect with the hon Member for Epsom. But the treaty has not yet been ratified by any other Government. It is not going to be ratified in its present form. It is a failure, as everybody in China admits and regrets; and yet the noble Lord comes down to the House and defends this treaty as if it were a living, vital, international document for the advancement of British trade! This is a painful example of the way in which foreign affairs are treated by the Government in this House. We are all grateful to the noble Lord for the courtesy and diligence with which he treats these subjects; and I think it would be unwise, and unfair to those whose interests we represent, if we did not say that the noble Lord, in replying on this and other questions, often speaks without the information and knowledge which alone can make his statements valuable.

SIR EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick): I do not desire to go at any length into this subject. The discussion can only be carried on under considerable restrictions, because the statement of the policy of the Government, while being so extended in scope, is so restricted in details that it is impossible to examine it very closely. The question of our trade with China has been discussed very considerably in the House several times, and one of the points presented with great force by the hon. Member for Barnsley was the kaleidoscopic changes that have taken place in the manner in which agreements in reference to China are regarded. I will not go into that question, and I have no wish to speak in a pessimistic tone in regard to the prospects of our trade with China. I agree with the hon. Member for Epsom that we should not regard with jealousy the progress of the trade of other countries as measured by percentages. We need not be alarmed at the percentages of the trade of other countries growing. It is not the percentages of trade we should look at; the question is whether the total amount of our own trade is diminishing or increasing. If the trade of other countries is increasing, it does not follow that it is increasing at our expense.

The most important recent event is the new commercial treaty. There are differences of opinion with regard to the merits of that treaty, but I freely admit that if that treaty secures entire immunity from *Likin*, it will be the great practical advantage to trade which has been held up as the great object of the British Government. But are we going to secure this? The hon. Member for Epsom spoke of the abolition as secured; but he must know the vast difference between what is secured in China on paper and what is secured in practice. What the treaty does is to propose to secure the abolition; and it seems to me that the battle has only just begun when immunity is secured on paper, and the question is whether the ingenuity of the Chinese, and the incentive to every Chinese official to keep it, will succeed in cheating the treaty and getting round its provisions. Just now China has to meet heavier expenses than she expected in connection with the indemnity, and that fact alone seems to be an ill-omened augury of what the result of the treaty is likely to be.

We have continually had held out by the present Government prospects of advantages to be secured in China. Some years ago, when great anxiety was expressed in the House, and Lord Curzon was Under Secretary, it was stated that arrangements had been made by which British steamers would visit riverside towns in China. The House was pleased at that time. We know what has happened since, but the statement was a relief to the anxiety, and the House relapsed into satisfaction, but things went from bad to worse. The House was also pleased at that time to be told that we had secured our position more than ever in the Yang-tze region. Our position in the Yang-tze region is no better today, however, than before these assurances were given. On the contrary, competition is stronger, and the rivalry—apparently exceptional and designed rivalry—on the part of other nations is more marked than ever. In some other regions, such as Manchuria, the prospective British position has suffered. What is to be feared with regard to China is that we are continually securing paper advantages which do no more than float on the stream of events. The mention of Wei-hai-wei almost always raises a smile in the House now. The noble Lord told us the necessity for Wei-hai-wei had ceased to exist for the present. It used to be said Wei-hai-wei was the resort of diplomacy in despair. Now that diplomacy has ceased to be in despair it is no longer of importance. I have always held that Wei-hai-wei was not the best choice we could have made. If we were to have a second naval base it ought to have been Chusan. It has been said, I think it was by the hon. Member for Epsom, that the choice of Wei-hai-wei did not prejudice that other selection on a future occasion. The right to select Chusan may remain in theory, but everybody knows that when we selected our second naval base it meant practically that we could not have another naval base in the same region.

The Persian question, however, raises more apprehension than the Chinese question at present. The noble Lord has said there is no change in the policy of the Government in regard to Persia. Was there no change of policy in any other part of the world with regard to Persia? Are things as they were four or five years ago?

LORD CRANBORNE: I said there was no change in our policy since I declared it from these Benches a year ago.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Some other things have changed during the past year. The policy of the Government is, I think, defined as respecting the integrity of Persia. Persia is nominally an independent State; but the financial bonds are being drawn closer around Persia every year, and the independence of Persia is really slipping away. The independence of Persia is a phrase. It is becoming less independent every year; and when the noble Lord tells us that we and the Russian Government are equally bound, and remain bound year after year, to respect the integrity of Persia, I fear this means that we are bound to respect a vanishing quantity, and that thet ime may come when, if we are restricting our policy to respecting the integrity of Persia, we shall find ourselves respecting nothing at all.

The same process is going on with regard to the railways. Russia has certain rights, and the House is told that we have certain rights also; but the time may come when we shall find that Russia has the railways and we are left in the lurch.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Or *vice versâ.*

SIR EDWARD GREY: The right hon. Gentleman says "or *vice versâ,*" but our experience in China in regard to these things is that as far as we are concerned it has always been *versâ* rather than *vice.*

Then with regard to our commerce in Persia, I think the hon. Member for Wolverhampton did not quote the noble Lord quite accurately. The noble Lord stated that a commercial treaty had been made which he apprehended might prejudice British commerce in Persia, and my hon. friend the Member for Wolverhampton said the noble Lord "had taken a strong note of it." I think the actual words were, "he had taken a serious note and made strong observations to the Persian Government."

LORD CRANBORNE: And given instructions to the Minister at Teheran.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I believe that would be included in the strong observations. The noble Lord said he expected to be able to declare considerable results to the House at some later date. Strong observations used to be addressed in similar circumstances to the Chinese Government, but they never produced much result, and there is a great parallel between the position in China then, when we were on the eve of recent developments, and that in Persia to-day. I am very doubtful whether the strong observations to the Persian Government will be more productive of result than the strong observations to the Chinese Government. The observations in this case ought to be addressed really to the Russian Government direct, not with any provocative object, but with the object of arriving at an understanding. I hold, as strongly as any one can hold, that there is room for both Russia and us in Asia; but we must agree; or we must make up our minds what is to be the essential minimum of our interests. There is room in the Atlantic for all the ocean-going steamers, but they find it convenient to arrange with one another what routes they shall take; and, unless we are in communication with Russia as to the spheres in which we shall operate in Asia, there will always be a danger of conflict.

Russia seems undoubtedly, as the hon. Member for King's Lynn said, to be carrying on a process of absorption in Persia, and it is being done by what, I think, a French writer has called peaceful penetration. It is not for those on this side of the House, who believe that a friendly understanding with Russia is possible, to impress on the Government how much they should give Russia to understand—we are prepared to see her extend her influence without any jealousy or regret on our part. We on this side have consistently refrained from pressing on the Government any forward or provocative policy. What I personally would like to see done is this. I would adopt the phrase of the Government themselves and say, with regard to this part of the world, that we want no new territory. I would gofurther,and say: We donot want to extend our sphere of influence, but we want it made perfectly clear what our interests are, and that the Government shall make up their minds as to what are the needs of our strategical position, and what the essential minimum of our interests. What we are afraid of is the possibility of our finding the situation changed by-and-bye, and that not to our advantage. All I would press on the noble Lord is this, that things are changing rapidly in that part of the world. Russia is expanding, and she means to expand further. There is time now, while Russia is still in the north of Persia, for us to make up our minds what is the essential minimum of our interests in that part of the world, and we should be frank with Russia with regard to it. I would like the noble Lord to say definitely on some future occasion whether the Government has adopted the position taken up by the hon. Member for King's Lynn—namely, that our strategical position is secured by maintaining supremacy at sea, and whether the policy of the Government with regard to Persia is to be restricted to maintaining what is essential to our strategical position. I hope that while there is time the Government will consider carefully what is our essential minimum of interest in that part of the world, and that they will secure that minimum by directly communicating with the Russian Government, and not by making strong observations to the Persian Government.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON: After the statement we have had from the Government, I ask leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

THE UNEMPLOYED.

*Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I rise for the purpose of moving the following Amendment to the Address—"But we desire humbly to express our regret that your Majesty's advisers have not seen fit to recommend the inclusion therein of such measures or measure as would have empowered the Government and local administrative authorities to acquire land for cultivation, and to set up undertakings whereby men and women unable to find employment in the ordinary labour market might be profitably set to work." First, I must be allowed very briefly to put the House in possession of several facts directly bearing upon this question of the unemployed. From returns supplied by the Labour Department of the Board of Trade, and published in the *Labour Gazette* issued this month, I find that in 225 unions with a total membership of 547,000 men, there are 27,685 men returned as unemployed—that is to say that, practically speaking, 5·5 per cent. of these trades unions are out of employment. A year ago I should say the proportion was 4·4 per cent. But I would not have the House assume that this 27,658 men represent the total number lacking employment. These figures refer exclusively to certain trades unions, and it is well understood that the unions which pay out-of-work benefits, and which are exclusively confined to skilled labour, and artisans, represent nothing like the high percentage of unemployment in periods of trade depression which obtain in less skilled trades. I estimate that the total number of wage earners in the country is 12,000,000, and if we deduct from that figure the number employed in domestic service, as agricultural labourers, and in the carrying trade, employments which are steady and regular, there are left, I estimate, 8,000,000 workers who are always affected by a depression in trade such as now exists. If we assume that the percentage of the unemployed among these workers is the same as it is known to be in the skilled artisan trades—namely, 5·5 per cent.—it gives a total now out of employment of over 400,000. I say deliberately that that is the minimum at which the number in Great Britain can be placed at the present time. There are over 400,000 working men and women, with all their helpless dependents, suffering hardship in consequence of the lack of employment. If that be so, and if my figures are only approximately accurate, it surely represents a social question of sufficient magnitude to arrest the serious attention of this House and of the country.

I have been at some trouble to ascertain what is the condition of employment in the different centres of industry up and down the country. In response to circulars I sent out some time ago to trades councils and large unions, I learn that the unemployed in Stockton are between 4,000 and 5,000, in Hull between 3,000 and 4,000, in West Hartlepool 5,000, and in Middlesbrough 2,000. In Leeds, where a labour bureau has been opened, the number who have signed the books is 3,662, this representing not the total number out of work, but the proportion who have reached the limits of subsistence and are willing to accept work of any kind rather than continue the fruitless search for work in their own employment. In Bradford 1,100 have signed the registers of the labour bureaux. In Manchester, according to the trades council, the police report that, all sleeping accommodation being filled, every night 2,000 houseless wanderers sleep in brickfields and in the open air. In Glasgow, according to the *Herald*, 20 per cent. of the men employed in the Clyde shipyards are out of employment, and this figure was given not to magnify the seriousness of the unemployed problem, but in order to justify the employers in reducing the wages. Now I wish to ask what is being done to meet the necessities of this case. Everyone will admit that to working men dependent upon a weekly wage deprivation of employment is a very serious matter indeed.

First I may draw attention to what the large trades unions of the country are doing in order to cope with this great evil. I have collected returns from those unions which pay out-of-work benefits, and before quoting them I would call the attention of the House to the fact that the out-of-work benefit is not continued for an indefinite period, for if it were it would be impossible for the unions to continue to exist. Now, the carpenters and joiners pay an out-of-work benefit of 10s. per week for the first twelve weeks, and of 6s. for the next twelve weeks. The friendly society of the Ironfounders pays 9s. the first thirteen weeks, 8s. the second thirteen weeks, and 6s. the third thirteen weeks. The boiler makers pay sums varying from 5s. 6d. to 11s. 6d. per week for fourteen weeks in each year. The railway servants pay from 10s. to 12s. for ten weeks, and half the amount for another ten weeks. The Durham Miners' Association pays 10s. weekly for about eighteen months, while the engineers pay 10s. for fourteen weeks, and 6s. so long as the man remains out of employment. But, after all, these payments represent little more than the average rent of a working man's house. In our big centres the rents vary from 8s. to 12s. weekly, and even for 12s. you only get a house of very inferior quality in parts of this City of London. The total sum spent last year by the trades union movement on out-of-work relief was £265,000, and that fact should be remembered to its credit at a time like the present.

In speaking of house rents I am dealing with matters concerning which I have knowledge. For very inconvenient houses, badly situated and containing very limited accommodation, 8s. per week is charged in the East End of London, and if the accommodation is at all decent the rents go up as high as 12s. weekly. I ask hon. Gentlemen to accept this, not as a mere expression of opinion on my part, but as an actual statement of fact.

Now, for one moment may I turn to the question as to who these unemployed are, because there is a disposition in many quarters to make it appear that people out of work are generally so through some fault or defect of their own, that they are drunkards or incapables, or men who are lazy and do not want employment. I would remind the House that even admitted, as I admit, that incapable men and drunken men are the first to be dismissed when trade becomes depressed, the reason for their being dismissed is not that they are incapable or drunken, but because there is no longer any demand for their labour. There is not the same amount of work to be performed, and when there is less work to be done, less men are required to do it. If every one of these men was perfect at his trade, sober, and diligent, the same number would still require to be dismissed when trade became depressed and orders fell off. I trust that we shall not hear in this House what is so painful when we see it stated in the Press, or hear it asserted on the platform, that the men are out of work owing to some defect of their own. They are unemployed because trade is depressed. If it be the case that among the unemployed are to be found the wastrels and outcasts of society, who are not capable of performing an honest day's work, they are more to be pitied than blamed. They are the victims of our industrial system, and I would say to those who blame them, parodying the words of Tennyson's "Poacher's Wife," "that had your sons been brought up as they were, your sons might have been the same."

But I would further point out that if we have to select the fit from the unfit, the willing from the lazy, there is only one means of accomplishing it, and that is to provide an opportunity for all willing to perform useful work. When we have that test we shall then be able to weed out the fit from the unfit, the willing from the lazy. I hope I shall not weary the House if I insist upon the importance of this question to the nation as a whole. I am not casting any reflections on individuals, but I know it must be difficult for an average Member of Parliament even to think himself into the place of an unemployed workman. Even in a time of good trade the income is barely sufficient—seldom more in the best of cases—than to keep things going. Most hon. Members are aware that there are from 28 per cent. to 30 per cent. of our working-class population which even in times of commercial prosperity, when work is plentiful and wages are good, live below the poverty line, not because they are drunkards, but because the total income of the household is not sufficient to provide the commonest necessaries of life. It is easy to understand that in such cases no resources can be accumulated to fall back upon in times of depression. Take the case of the men on the Clyde. Fifty or sixty skilled artisans are cast adrift in one week. They begin tramping from workshop to workshop, and from town to town, in search of employment, but with all their skill and with all their opportunities they are not allowed to earn their bread by honest labour. Meantime, the resources of the homes are dwindling, the savings are being spent, and the furniture and clothing are being sold or pawned to keep the homes going. By-and-bye there comes a time—it has come to hundreds of thousands—when the children cry for bread, and when there is no bread with which to still their cries. I ask hon. Members to remember that when a man gets to that position and finds himself an incumbrance upon the earth, a social and industrial outcast, he loses heart and hope; he sinks in the social scale, and becomes the wastrel whom all men malign. I trust, therefore, the House will, in view of the importance of this question, not merely to the men out of work, but to the community as a whole, take serious heed of the matter, in order to devise some means whereby to provide every willing Englishman with an opportunity of working for his living. There are two methods by which this evil requires to be combated. First of all, some means is required whereby the amount of work will be increased. If we could increase the expenditure of the nation, work would be increased, the labour market would be brisk, and the unemployed would be absorbed. When a reduction of wages is advocated as a means of tiding the country over a period of industrial depression, we are, thereby only increasing the evil from which we are suffering. The more wages are reduced the less there is to spend, and the less there is to spend the less demand there is for commodities, and the greater the number of people out of employment. I submit, therefore, that in order to permanently remedy this oft-recurring depression in trade and its consequence, shortage of employment, we must organise industry in such a manner as to increase the spending power of the community, and thereby increase the amount of work to be performed. That leads us straight to the main questionf There can be no permanent increase in the work of the nation without a large addition to the quantity of land under cultivation.

My second remedy is, some form of work which will be elastic enough to be able to absorb in times of depression the so-called surplus population for which there is no room in the ordinary labour market. That points to great public works, such as the making of embankments, the reclamation of foreshores, and the reafforesting of large tracts of our country. I will deal first of all with public works, and I would remind the House of Commons that the Board of Trade already possesses very large powers under the Foreshores Act of 1866 for dealing with this most important matter. I understand that the Board of Trade could at once begin to reclaim practically every foreshore in the country where the waters of the sea have invaded the land unduly. As a matter of fact, a beginning was made in this direction some time ago, but owing to the opposition of landlords with foreshore rights, the work had to be given up after only having been partially undertaken. As an illustration of what could be done in the matter of reclaiming land from the sea, let me quote two instances from well-known experiments carried out in Holland. The Haarlem Lake was reclaimed and 46,000 acres were added to the arable land of Holland, and now the Government of Holland propose to reclaim from the Zuyder Zee a million acres by the same means. If that can be done in Holland it can also be done in England. The need for it is quite as great here as it is there, and the opportunities for carrying it through are equally available. May I remind the House that, according to a scheme prepared by an eminent engineer, 200,000 acres might be reclaimed from the Wash alone, if properly undertaken. That would mean employment for 10,000 men for about fifteen years. The need is great and the powers exist, and pressure should be applied to the Board of Trade to put its powers into operation. One small experiment was tried at the beginning of the last century, by which 60,000 acres were reclaimed at a total expenditure of £580,000, and now land, which was formerly swept by the sea, is covered with cornfields and comfortable farmsteads, which bring in a rental of £110,000 a year, leaving an annual surplus over and above the cost of reclamation of some £81,000. Therefore, I am entitled to say that the reclamation of foreshore is not a theoretical, but a practical, question, which can be undertaken by the nation, and which would add to the estates of the nation, because the land reclaimed would be the property of the nation, and its benefits would not pass into the pockets of private individuals.

As to reafforesting, I would remind the House that 90 per cent. of the timber used in this country, in our mines, and for pulp in our paper mills, is imported from abroad. According to the Board of Trade Returns, the value of the timber imported last year was £5,435,000, and I submit respectfully that every stick of that timber could be grown within our own shores with great advantage to ourselves. In this case also we have a special report of a Departmental Committee to guide us. According to it there are 20,000,000 acres of land lying absolutely waste and bare at the present moment, in many cases not even carrying sheep, which might be utilised for the purpose of wood-growing. An experiment on these lines tree-planting and afforesting, has been tried in Germany, with the result that after paying all costs, including interest on expenditure, a clear profit of 38s. per annum per acre remains, and that upon land which previously only produced 4s. an acre for sporting purposes. Here I submit also there is much profitable work to be done, which would employ thousands and tens of thousands if properly undertaken. It is a constant matter of complaint, and justly so, that in matters of wood and other essentials for our industries, this country is dependent upon other nations. Here is a means by which that dependence could be lessened and the wood required produced at home, work being given to the unemployed and a substantial profit made on the transaction. With these inducements it is difficult to understand why there should be any hesitation on the part of the Government to embark on work of this kind.

Now I come to what I term the permanent remedy for this question of the unemployed. I need scarcely remind the House that, belonging as I do to the economic school of thought designated Socialism, there can be, in my opinion, no final solution of the unemployed problem as long as production for profit continues to dominate our commercial system. I will not, however, propound a Socialist solution of the question. I am more concerned with finding some practical reform which will benefit the unemployed. There is one step which though for differing reasons might perhaps meet with acceptance on both sides of the House, and that is that the Local Authorities should be empowered to acquire land for cultivation. Here, as in the case of timber, there is room for great development in the matter of producing things which the nation requires, and for which it is now dependent on other nations. The total cultivable area of Great Britain is just over 36,000,000 acres, and out of that total the amount under cultivation is just over 16,000,000. That is to say, that more than half of the cultivable land of the country is not being put to anything like a profitable use. And whilst that is so our imports of food stuffs increase year by year. At the beginning of the last century the bulk of the food required by the people of England was produced at home. Now, after a century of progress, out of five loaves consumed four are baked from foreign-grown wheat. The importance of this question is now beginning to be realised. As long as this country is dependent for its food supplies upon foreign nations, we are under a menace which cannot be overestimated, and which may produce the most serious results. Therefore, I submit that if some means could be devised whereby the quantity of land under cultivation could be all increased, the quantity of produce, from gardens, dairies, farmyards and corn-fields would be all increased, and our dependence on foreign nations would be lessened, and we should be doing more for the prosperity of the country than by any number of filibustering expeditions for the extension of our Empire.

The first essential of Empire is a sound heart at home, and so long as this unemployed evil is in our midst, it is a cancer eating into our social system which will spread and contaminate every section of society. The question then is, what can be done? We are now paying for dairy produce close upon £25,000,000 a year, and for food stuffs £59,000,000 a year. Altogether I believe we are now paying to other nations for food supplies over £120,000,000, and I venture to assert 75 per cent. of this expenditure could be spent on food produced at home, to the great advantage of all concerned. If I am asked as to the means to be employed in order to bring this desirable result about, my reply is: The same power by which between £5,000,000 and £6,000,000 is spent in opening up Uganda. If we were to do as much for the people of England as has been done for the people of Uganda—

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed Tomorrow.

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 19th February, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Report by the CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES of the House of Lords and the CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS in the House of Commons—

"That, having regard to Section 16 (2) of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, the provisions of the Fife Electric Power Company Order, and Part III. of the Hamilton, Motherwell, and Wishaw Tramways Order, are of such a character that they ought to be dealt with by Private Bills and not by Provisional Orders.

"That the provisions of the Life Association of Scotland Order and the Scottish American Mortgage Company, Limited, Order do not relate wholly to Scotland, and are of such a character that they ought to be dealt with by Private Bills and not by Provisional Orders.

"That the provisions of the Lanarkshire and Dumbartonshire Railway Order are of such a character that they ought to be dealt with by Private Bill and not by Provisional Order.

"That the provisions of Parts IV. and V. of the Glasgow Corporation (Police) Order raise such questions of policy and principle that they ought to be dealt with by Private Bill and not by Provisional Order."

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890.

Order in Council of the 16th December, 1902, amending the "Barotziland North-Western Rhodesia Order in Council, 1899."

Orders in Council of the 16th February, 1903, entitled "The Siam Order in Council, 1903," and the "Southern Rhodesia Order in Council, 1903."

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1858.

Order in Council of 16th December, 1902, approving a statement of proposed new and revised appointments and alteration of salaries in the establishment of the Secretary of State for India in Council.

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.

Return of the number of aliens that arrived from the Continent at Ports in the United Kingdom, in each month of the year 1903: Ordered to be laid before the House.—(*The Lord Wolverton.*)

COLONIAL PROBATES ACT, 1892.

Order in Council of 16th February, 1903, applying the Colonial Probates Act, 1892, to the colony of the Transvaal.

DOCKYARD PORTS REGULATION ACT, 1865.

Order in Council of 16th February, 1903, defining the Dockyard Port of Portland and making regulations with respect thereto.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Two Orders of Council of the 16th February, 1903, fixing the establishment of the Corporation of the Trinity House; Confirming byelaws made by the Pilotage Board for the Port of Newport (Mon.).

ST. LUCIA.

Rule amending Rule No. 224 relating to the flogging of prisoners.

GRENADA.

Rule applying the marks system to escaped and re-captured prisoners.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 AND 1896.

Five Orders, numbered 6,594, 6,608, 6,612, 6,615, and 6,616 respectively, relating to the landing of foreign animals in Great Britain.

PUBLIC RECORDS (WAR OFFICE).

Seventh Schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents existing or accruing in the office of His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the War Department which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Orders made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising construction of light railways: in the Urban District of Whitley and Monkseaton, in the County of Northumberland

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

in the County of Gloucester, in the Borough of Cheltenham, and in the Urban District of Charlton Kings; in the County of Wilts, from Amesbury to Bulford; in the County of Cornwall, from Padstow to Trequrrain, in the parish of St. Mawgan; in the Municipal Borough of Poole and the Urban District of Branksome, in the County of Dorset; in the County of Essex, in the Urban Districts of Walthamstow, Leyton, and Chingford.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND) (GENERAL ORDERS):

Two General Orders, dated 13th May, and 17th December, 1902.

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS ACT, 1896.

Amended general regulations made by the Local Government Board for Ireland, dated 9th February, 1903.

MILITIA ACT, 1882 (DEPUTY LIEUTENANTS).

Returns of descriptions of qualifications of deputy lieutenants lodged during 1902 as furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

NATIONAL DEBT (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).

Account of the gross amount of all moneys received and paid by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt on account of the Fund for Military Savings Banks, from 19th September 1845 to 5th January 1903.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SHOPS (HOURS OF CLOSING) BILL [H. L.]

A Bill to empower local authorities to fix the hours of closing of shops was presented by the Lord Ribblesdale; read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 1.)

THE PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION.

EARL GREY: My Lords, I desire to take this, the earliest opportunity open to me, to ask the Lord Chancellor whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to re-introduce, at an early date, with the view of its becoming law before the end of the current session, the Prevention of Corruption Bill, the principle of which has already been affirmed in this House, and which aims at making the acceptance, or the offer, of a secret commission a criminal offence. I would further like to express a hope that the noble and learned Lord may see his way to give an assurance to the House that he will not only introduce the measure at an early date, but use his great influence to secure its passage during the current session. Last year I had the honour to serve on a departmental Committee of the War Office on canteen contracts; and the evidence taken in the course of that inquiry disclosed a state of things so grave that I hold it would be a scandal if any delay were allowed to occur before this House took the necessary action to make this form of corruption a criminal offence. I am convinced that the practice of accepting and offering secret commissions is nothing short of a canker attacking the vitals of our commerce. I hold it to be the duty of this House to take such prompt and vigorous action as will rally behind it public opinion of a strong enough character to enable us to force this Bill through the other House of Parliament, notwithstanding the apathy and hostility it may have to encounter there. I cannot believe that a Bill on the subject will meet with any opposition in the other House. I have been requested by the great body of co-operators who, as your Lordships are aware, number 7,000,000 of the population, to ask the noble and learned Earl what are the intentions of the Government with respect to this subject, and to express a hope that the Government will in the interest of honest trading endeavour to secure the passage of a Bill through Parliament.

LORD ALVERSTONE: My Lords, before the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack answers the question that has been put to him, I wish to join in the noble Earl's appeal. Your Lordships will remember that two years ago I myself introduced a Bill of a somewhat ambitious character, which was identically the same as the Bill introduced by the late Lord Chief Justice, Lord Russell of Killowen. When I withdrew that Bill the noble and learned Earl was good enough to introduce a Bill dealing with the matter from a less ambitious point of view, but grappling with the main difficulties. I believe that Bill passed your Lordships' House, though it was not possible, owing to the pressure of public business, to pass it through the other House. Since then I have received, and am constantly receiving, appeals of the same kind as those received by the noble Earl opposite. A mass of material was collected by the late Lord Chief Justice, which goes on gathering in amount from month to month, and I am satisfied that the language used by the noble Earl as to the extent of the evil is in no way exaggerated. I should like to join in the appeal to the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack to do his utmost to pass, at any rate, a measure which will lay down the principle we contend for and make the way more easy for further legislation.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): My Lords, I do not conceal from myself that what has been said by both noble Lords on this matter is well worthy of attention. I have myself received since last year ample proof of the extraordinary development of the system of corruption by what are delicately called commissions, but which are, in truth, bribes to people to betray their duties to their employers. But whether the facts collected and published have not to some extent increased it I do not say; I cannot help thinking, however, that a great many people have learned from them, for the first time, how easy it is by pressure on others to insist on commissions. The fact undoubtedly is that the system has grown extensively, and I quite agree that it demands the attention claimed for it. As far as I am concerned, I am happy to say that I hold in my hand a Bill which, as soon as the other business of the House is disposed of, I propose to ask your Lordships to read a first time. At all events, your Lordships will, at an early period of the session, have an opportunity of discussing and passing the measure in this House. At the same time I cannot forbear from giving this warning, that a Bill which is not considered of what I might call first-rate political importance to either side is not treated with that attention which Bills of a more ambitious character, and appealing more to the spirit of Party politics, are likely to receive. In the congested state of the House of Commons business, there is no doubt that, there is great difficulty in getting on with a Bill of a character that is neutral, although it is most important socially. I will do my best to push the Bill through the House, and will do what I can to advance the prospect of its becoming law, because nobody feels more strongly than I do the enormous importance of this question.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL [H.L.]

A Bill for the better prevention of corruption was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 2.)

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.

Return (in part) respecting: Laid before the House (pursuant to Order of this day), and to be printed. (No. 3.)

House adjourned at ten minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 19th February, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

PRIVATE BILLS.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN reported, That, in accordance with Standing Order 79, he had conferred with the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, for the purpose of determining in which House of Parliament the respective Private Bills should be first considered, and they had determined that the Bills contained in the following list should originate in the House of Lords, viz.:—

1. All Saints, Poplar (Rate Abolition).
2. Antrim, Down, Armagh, and Belfast Electric Power.
3. Aston Manor Improvement.
4. Bangor Corporation.
5. Barry Railway.

6. Belfast Water.
7. Birmingham Corporation.
8. Birmingham District Tramways.
9. Bournemouth Corporation Tramways.
10. Bournemouth Gas and Water.
11. Bradford Corporation.
12. Brighton Corporation.
13. Bristol Corporation.
14. British Gas Light Company (Norwich).
15. Bury and District Joint Water Board.
16. Cardiff Railway.
17. Carmarthenshire Electric Power.
18. Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity.
19. Chatham and District Light Railways.
20. Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power.
21. Derby Gas.
22. Dewsbury, Batley, and Birstal Tramways.
23. Didcot, Newbury, and Southampton Railway.
24. Dudley, Stourbridge, and District Tramways.
25. Exeter Corporation.
26. Exeter Railway.
27. Faversham Gas.
28. Frinton-on-Sea Sea Defences.
29. Gosport, Fareham, and Cosham Tramways.
30. Harrogate Water.
31. Harrow and Stanmore Gas.
32. Hastings Harbour.
33. Hastings Harbour District Railway.
34. Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment).
35. Hastings Tramways (Extensions).
36. Hexham Gas.
37. Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways.
38. India Rubber, Gutta Percha, and Telegraph Works Company.
39. King's College, London.
40. Knott End Railway (Extension of Time).
41. Lima Railways.
42. Liverpool University.
43. London and North Western Railway.
44. London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway.
45. London County Asylums (Receiving Houses).
46. Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways.
47. Manchester Corporation.
48. Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire).
49. Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire).
50. Maryport Harbour.
51. Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.
52. Mid Yorkshire Tramways.
53. Milford Docks.
54. Nantwich Gas.
55. Nantwich Urban District Council.
56. North Cheshire Tramways.
57. North Western Electricity and Power Gas.
58. North's Navigation Collieries.
59. Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways.
60. Old Bridewell Burying Ground.
61. Oldham Corporation.
62. Pelican and British Empire Life Office.
63. Plymouth and Stonehouse Gas.
64. Pontypridd Urban District Council.
65. Poole and District Electric Traction.
66. Port Talbot Railway and Docks.
67. Preston and Horwich Tramways.
68. Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage.
69. Rickmansworth Gas.
70. Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements.
71. St. Philip's Chapel (Regent Street).
72. Salford Corporation.
73. Scunthorpe Urban District Water.
74. Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation.
75. Shepshed Urban District Gas.
76. Shropshire, Worcestershire, and East Denbighshire Electric Power.
77. Somerset and District Electric Power.
78. Southampton Harbour.
79. South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways.
80. South Lancashire Tramways.
81. South Staffordshire Tramways.
82. South Wales Mineral Railway.
83. South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway.
84. Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal.
85. Sutton Coldfield Corporation.
86. Taff Vale Railway.
87. Torquay Corporation Water.
88. Tynemouth and District Tramways.
89. Wakefield and District Tramways.
90. Wellington (Salop) Gas.
91. West Bromwich Corporation.
92. Western Trust.
93. Willesden Urban District Council.

94. Wirral Railway.
95. Wisbech Canal (Abandonment).
96. Worthing Corporation (Tramways).

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND).

Petitions for legislation: from Nairn; Glassary; North Knapdale; Drymen; Killearn; Balfron; Dunlop; Earlston; East Kilbride; and Carluke; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petitions for prohibition: from Melton Constable; and Northampton; to lie upon the Table.

SITES VALUES OF INSANITARY AREAS.

Petition from Fulham, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 16th December 1902, amending the Barotziland North Western Rhodesia Order in Council, 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890.

Copy presented, of Orders in Council of 16th February 1903, entitled "The Siam Order in Council, 1903," and "The Southern Rhodesia Order in Council, 1903" [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 16th February 1903, fixing the Establishment of the Corporation of the Trinity House [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 16th February 1903, confirming byelaws made by the Pilotage Board for the Port of Newport (Mon.) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

DOCKYARD PORTS REGULATION ACT, 1865.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 16th February 1903, defining the Dockyard Port of Portland and making Regulations with respect thereto [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1858.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 16th December 1902, approving a statement of proposed new and revised appointments and alterations of salaries in the establishment of the Secretary of State for India in Council [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL PROBATES ACT, 1892.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 16th February 1903, applying The Colonial Probates Act, 1892, to the Colony of the Transvaal [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

GRENADA.

Copy presented, of Rule applying the Marks System to Escaped and Recaptured Prisoners [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SAINT LUCIA.

Copy presented, of Rule amending Rule No. 224 relating to the Flogging of Prisoners [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

NATIONAL DEBT (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).

Account presented, of the Gross Amount of all Moneys received and paid by the Commissioners for the reduction of the National Debt on account of the fund for Military Savings Banks, from 19th September 1845 to 5th January 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 17.]

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND).

Account ordered, "of the Receipts and Payments of the Accountant General of the Supreme Courts of Judicature in Ireland in respect of the funds of suitors in the said Court, including therein funds to the credit of Lunacy Accounts, in the year to the 30th day of September 1902; together with a Statement of Liabilities and Assets, and particulars of Securities in Court, on the 30th day of September 1902."—(*Mr. Hayes Fisher.*)

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES FUND, 1901-2.

Copy ordered, "of the Accounts of the Civil Contingencies Fund, 1901-2, showing (1) the Receipts and Payments in connection with the Fund in the year ended the 31st day of March 1902; (2) the Distribution of the Capital of the Fund at the commencement and close of the year; together with Copy of the Correspondence with the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon."—(*Mr. Hayes Fisher.*)

NATIONAL GALLERY (REPORT).

Copy ordered, "of Report of the Director of the National Gallery for the year 1902, with Appendices."—(*Mr. Hayes Fisher.*)

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.

Return ordered, "of the number of Aliens that arrived from the Continent at ports in the United Kingdom in each month of the year 1903."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

TRADE AND NAVIGATION.

Accounts ordered, "relating to Trade and Navigation of the United Kingdom for each month during the year 1903."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Sugar Bounties in the Australian Commonwealth — Position of New South Wales.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): To ask the Postmaster General, as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, can he state, or give Papers stating, the present state of the law in the Australian Commonwealth with reference to rebates on sugar grown within the Commonwealth and to fiscal advantages of any other kinds granted thereby to growers or manufacturers of sugar; and can he explain the communication made by the Premier of New South Wales, protesting against New South Wales having to bear the cost of a rebate on sugar, or will he lay upon the Table Papers explaining that communication.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain for the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*) The import duty on cane sugar in Australia is 6s. per cwt., and on other sugar 10s. per cwt. The Excise duty on sugar grown in Australia is 3s. per cwt., subject in the case of all sugar in the production of which only white labour is employed to a rebate of 2s. per cwt. No information has been received as to the communication alleged to have been made by the Premier of New South Wales as to the payment of this rebate.

Commercial Treaty between Great Britain and Russia—Date of Expiration.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at what date the commercial treaty between Britain and Russia would, under normal circumstances, expire; whether Russia has definitely agreed to maintain the present treaty notwithstanding the protest which she made regarding the Sugar Bounties Convention; and whether, if the treaty is to be denounced, the Government will undertake to give due notice of this, so that in the meantime trade with Russia may be carried on with confidence.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) In reply to the first and third Questions I have to say that the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation with Russia of 12th January, 1859, will remain in force "until the expiration of twelve months after either of the High Contracting Powers shall have given notice to the other of its intention to terminate the same." As to the second Question, I would refer the hon. Member to the Paper which was distributed yesterday, Commercial, No. 1, 1903.

Police Rate—Suggested Alteration of Financial Year.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the surplus under The Police Expenses Act, 1875, has, owing to the rate levied in each year being in excess of the requirements under the Act, risen from a sum of £358,462 on 31st March, 1893, to a sum of £696,488 on 31st March, 1902, and will he say why in these circumstances it is necessary to impose the maximum rate of 5d. on the local authorities; whether he will consider the advisability of reducing the amount of the rate levied from the local authorities of the Metropolis, so as to prevent any further surplus being accumulated; and of making the financial year for the police rate run concurrently with the Local Government financial year, viz., from the 1st April to 31st March, and to arrange for the police rate warrants being paid in four quarterly instalments, viz., on the 9th May, 9th August, 9th November, and 9th February in each year instead of as at present.

(*Answered by Mr. Akers Douglas.*) The Act quoted in the Question is not now in force, having been repealed in 1893. The expenses of the Metropolitan Police are defrayed out of an annual sum which may not, by the Police Rate Act, 1868, exceed 9d. in the pound on the full annual value of all property rateable for the relief of the poor. The rate of 9d. is now levied, and, allowing for contributions from the Local Taxation Account, the rate drawn from the local authorities amounts to about 5d. I do not think that an investigation of the figures quoted in the Question shows that the rate levied is in excess of the requirements. The sum of £696,488, referred to as a surplus, was a balance which, after the deduction (to which it was subject) of £139,680 due to the Pension Fund Account, was found inadequate (even allowing for all receipts subsequent to the 31st March) to meet the actual charges on the Police Fund up to the 10th August, when the next half-yearly rate warrants were payable. Moreover, the excess of receipts over expenditure for the whole year ended 31st March, 1902, did not exceed £28,960, and there does not therefore appear to be room for a reduction of the rate. As regards the last part of the Question, I do not at present see sufficient ground for taking steps to alter the present procedure in regard to the police rate warrants.

Indian Civil Servants at the Coronation—Pay During Absence from Duty.

SIR SEYMOUR KING: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has now received a reply from the Government of India as to the Government servants who took privilege leave in order to join the Indian Volunteer Contingent which came Home for the Coronation; whether they were informed that they would not receive any pay for the extra period of their detention at Home in consequence of the King's illness; and what decision has been arrived at.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) The Government of India have informed me that they have decided that the period of detention in excess of the leave taken by Government servants who came to this country with the Indian Volunteer Contingent for the Coronation shall be treated as duty carrying full pay, and that orders have been issued accordingly.

Cost of the Delhi Durbar.

MR. CAINE (Cornwall, Camborne): To ask the Secretary of State for India what has been the total cost of the Delhi Durbar; and if he will lay upon the Table of the House a Paper distinguishing the different heads of expenditure making up the amount.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) The Budget Estimates for the present financial year included £260,000 for the cost of the Delhi Durbar. The revised Estimates for the year will not be received for several weeks; when they are received they will be published.

Interest Remitted on Loans to Indian Princes.

MR. CAINE: To ask the Secretary of State for India what is the total amount of annual interest remitted on loans to Indian Princes, and by whom will the charge for this interest be borne.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) The total amount of interest recently remitted on the occasion of the Delhi Durbar on loans granted to or raised by Native States is eleven lakhs a year for three years. The charge resulting from the measure will be borne by the revenues of India.

Hyderabad Assigned Districts.

MR. CAINE: To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will supplement the Paper Cd. 1321, of 1902,† relating to the agreement with the Nizam respecting the assigned districts, by some selection of the State Papers or other documents referred to in paragraphs 4 and 6, and with tables showing the amount paid during each of the last ten years to His Highness the Nizam's

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† The Paper referred to is "East India—Agreement respecting Hyderabad Assigned Districts."

Government, on account of surplus revenue from the assigned districts, and the methods of computation by which the decision concerning the annual payment of twenty-five lakhs of rupees has been arrived at.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) The first paragraph of the Resident's letter to which the hon. Gentleman presumably refers, explains that the settlement was the outcome of informal and private communications, of which there is no official record. There are thus no Papers to be presented in addition to those included in the recent Return. The annual payments to the Nizam of surplus revenue for the last ten years have been as follows (in tens of rupees):—1900–1901, *nil*; 1899–1900, Rx.185,008; 1898–9, Rx.47,229; 1897 – 8, *nil*; 1896 – 7, Rx.72,481; 1895–6, Rx.29,173; 1894–5, Rx.116,205; 1893–4, Rx.65,000; 1892–3, Rx.83,014; 1891–2, Rx.130,697. The annual rent of twenty-five lakhs has not been arrived at by any exact calculations, but is intended as a liberal payment to the Nizam, having regard to the present revenue of the assigned districts, and the improvements which will be possible in their administration under the terms of the perpetual lease.

Indian Princes Deposed for Maladministration—Methods of Procedure.

MR. CAINE: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will grant a Return showing the Indian princes and chiefs who have been deposed on the ground of maladministration or misconduct since Lord Canning's Adoption Proclamation of 1858, stating with what procedure, judicial or otherwise, the inquiry preceding their deposition was conducted; and whether his attention has been drawn to the Resolution of the Indian National Congress praying that no Indian prince or chief should be deposed on the ground of maladministration or misconduct until the fact of such maladministration or misconduct should have been established to the satisfaction of a public tribunal which shall command the confidence alike of Government and of the Indian princes and chiefs; and will he state what action he proposes to take in the matter?

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) Only six cases have occurred of native Indian chiefs being deposed since 1858. In respect of three of these, viz., Baroda (1875), Manipur (1891), and Jhalawar (1896), Papers have been presented to Parliament. In the other three cases the procedure was as follows: (1) Suket (1878); Report of political officer appointed to inquire into a rebellion caused by the Raja's maladministration. (2) Bharatpur (1900); Report of political officer appointed to inquire into a murder committed by the Maharaja. (3) Panna (1902); Report of Special Commission appointed to inquire into charges against the Maharaja of complicity in a murder. I did not observe any reference to the subject in the Resolutions, as reported in the Press, of the last meeting of the Indian National Congress, and I see no reason to take any action in the matter.

German Locomotives for Indian Railways—Dates of Deliveries.

COLONEL DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs): To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state the date agreed upon between the East India Railway Company and the contractors in Germany for the delivery of the locomotives last ordered, and the dates upon which actual deliveries have taken place.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) The contract was made by the East Indian Railway Company. I am not acquainted with the facts connected either with the details of the contract or its fulfilment by the contractors.

Payment of Gratuities to Time-expired Men for Services in China.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether time-expired men in the Royal Navy who are entitled to gratuity for recent operations in China may rely upon receiving the same without delay, seeing that men now serving received their share three months ago.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster*): The payment of the China gratuity to men who have left the naval service has been delayed owing to the fact that the details as to the distribution of the Peking prize money, which was superintended by a committee of Indian officers, have not yet reached this country. As the share, if any, received from the latter fund has to be taken into consideration in calculating the amount due in respect of the China gratuity, it is not possible to proceed with the payment of the gratuity pending the arrival of this information, which, however, is expected to be soon available.

Atlantic Shipping Combination—Delay in Publication of Agreements.

MR. RENWICK (Newcastle-on-Tyne): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will state when the agreements between the British Government and the North Atlantic Combine, or Mr. Pierpont Morgan, or the International Mercantile Marine Company, and between the British Government and the Cunard Steamship Company, will be placed in the hands of Members of this House; and, if such agreements are not yet completed, will he state the reason of the long continued delay in their completion?

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The agreements are approaching completion, but I cannot say definitely when they will be laid upon the Table. Negotiations as to details affecting important and diverse interests, together with the consideration of somewhat complex points of law, are accountable for the delay which has occurred.

Boards of Guardians—Lack of Control over Permanent Officials.

MR. MORRELL (Oxfordshire, Woodstock): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the position in which boards of guardians are placed through want of control over the officers whose salaries and pensions the ratepayers are called upon to provide; and whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the matter with a view to the provision of a remedy.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I have received a resolution on this subject from the Woodstock Board of Guardians. Boards of guardians possess considerable powers of control over their officers, and, except in the case of their principal officers, have the power of dismissal. As regards the principal officers, the consent of the Local Government Board is required to dismissal, but, where there is cause for dissatisfaction, it is competent to the guardians to make representations to the Board.

Ireland, Warrants for Desertion—Delay in Execution.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that five warrants for the arrest of persons under separate charges of deserting their families preferred against them by the Mountmellick Board of Guardians, and granted upon sworn informations, have been lodged with the police sergeant at Mountmellick since the 30th May, 1902, and that none of those warrants have been executed; and will he explain what is the reason for this action on the part of the constabulary?

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Three such warrants were received by the constabulary since the date mentioned. The expenses incidental to the arrest of persons in such circumstances are a statutory charge against the guardians. The guardians are unwilling to defray the expenses attending the execution of two of the warrants, the families having left the union. In the third case the defendant has absconded and cannot be found.

Proposed New Rifle for the Army—Advantages.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: To ask the Secretary of State for War, has any decision been arrived at as to the adoption of the proposed new rifle; is it a consequence of the reduction in length of the barrel by five inches, while the old ammunition is retained, that the proposed new rifle kicks much more than those of the present pattern; has the effect of this increased kick upon accuracy of shooting been taken into account; and will this be further considered before the final adoption and issue of the proposed rifle.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) A new pattern of rifle, which is a modification of the present rifle, has been approved. The slight increase of recoil is unimportant, and is more than compensated for by the reduction in weight. Prolonged trials as to the accuracy of the rifle and its other features were carried out before the Small Arms Committee recommended its adoption.

Duke of York's School—Reasons for Removal.

MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether His Majesty's Government have decided to remove the Duke of York's Royal Military School from Chelsea; and, if so, what are the grounds on which this decision has been arrived at, where the school will be re-established, and to what uses it is proposed that its site in Chelsea shall in future be devoted.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The question of the removal of the school from Chelsea is under the consideration of the Departments concerned. It may, however, be stated that the existing buildings are inadequate, and the site is unsuitable for any increased accommodation.

Police at Waltham Abbey Mills—Extra Pay.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he will explain why the policemen on duty outside the cordite buildings at Waltham Abbey receive 1s. per day extra pay, seeing that the workmen inside the building do not meet with the same consideration.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The rates of pay of members of the Metropolitan Police are fixed by the Home Office for ordinary police duties, and a special allowance of 1s. a day extra is given for exceptional employment. The rates of pay of workmen in this factory are fixed with regard to the circumstances of their employment, so that to give them a special allowance would be to pay them twice over in respect of the same conditions of work.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The Grenadier Guards.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if Colonel Kinloch or any officer of the 1st Grenadier Guards has demanded to be tried by court-martial; and, if so, will the court-martial be granted.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): No such application has been received. Nor is it within the right of any officer to demand a court-martial.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT (Cheshire, Macclesfield): Will the right hon. Gentleman be so kind as to say whether he will grant as a favour that which an officer is not allowed to demand as a right—namely, a court-martial?

MR. BRODRICK: That will depend on the circumstances.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: In this case?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! Notice had better be given of that Question.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): May I ask why an officer of the Army has not the same privileges as an officer of the Navy?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the present Question.

South African Garrison.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what is the present strength of British Forces in South Africa; and if he can state the approximate number of British troops contemplated to be kept in that country.

MR. BRODRICK: The present strength of the Forces in South Africa is about 38,000. The garrison is in course of reduction to about 30,000.

The War Commission.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what are the reasons for which the examination of witnesses before the Commission to inquire into the conduct of the late war has been conducted throughout with closed doors, and the consequent with-holding of the evidence from the public; and what communications have passed between the Government and the Commission on this subject; and what suggestions or representations were made by the Government, either directly or indirectly, to the Commission with regard to the secret character of this inquiry; and what explanation, if any, has he to give for the departure by the Commission of Inquiry from the examination of witnesses in public.

MR. BRODRICK: These questions rest entirely with the Commission and do not in any way concern the Secretary of State for War.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I must now ask what suggestions or representations were made by the Government, either directly or indirectly, with regard to the secret character of the inquiry?

MR. BRODRICK: No representations were made by my Department, nor, so far as I am aware, by any Department or Member of the Government.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Why has the right hon. Gentleman changed his mind with reference——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That question does not arise out of the answer.

1st Class Army Reserve.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any calculation has been made, and can be laid before Parliament, as to the rate at which the 1st Class Army Reserve is likely to regain the number at which it stood before the recent war.

MR. BRODRICK: So far as Sections A., B., and C. are concerned, it is expected that the numbers will reach the figure at which they stood in October 1899, at the latest in 1905. As regards Section D., the number depends on voluntary re-engagements, and, therefore, any calculation would be too problematical to be of any real value. The adoption of the three years system will cause a rapid increase of the Reserve after 1905.

Strength of Army Corps.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War the present effective strength of the First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Army Corps respectively.

MR. BRODRICK: I hope to be able to make a statement on this subject at an early date, and will then lay a Paper on the Table giving the actual distribution of the troops.

MR. LAMBERT: Can the right hon. Gentleman not give us some fuller information before that discussion takes place?

MR. BRODRICK: I will make a statement in reply on that occasion.

MR. LAMBERT: May I press the right hon. Gentleman? Could he not make a statement before the discussion takes place?

MR. BRODRICK: I do not know whether I can have a statement prepared before that. I do not know when the debate will come on. There is no concealment in the matter, and I shall give the House the fullest information I can.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman endeavour to do so as soon as he possibly can before the debate takes place?

MR. BRODRICK: I have already replied to that question.

Mr. Brodrick's Visit to Malta.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War under what authority and in what capacity did he hold inspections of troops and receive guards of honour at Malta, and what precedent, if any, is there for the holding of inspections and the receiving of guards of honour by any former Secretary of State for War.

Mr. BRODRICK: As regards the first part of the Question, the inspection alluded to was held by the Governor, who commanded and took the salute. As regards the second part of the Question, the Governor adopted the procedure of 1875 when a Secretary of State for War visited Malta.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: In what capacity did the right hon. Gentleman receive a salute of sixteen guns, and who pays for the gunpowder?

The question was not answered.

Conveyance of Ministers in Warships.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty in how many instances during the last three years have ships of war of the Royal Navy been used for the conveyance of Ministers of the Crown, unconnected with the Admiralty, on voyages either for public or private purposes; whether he will mention the names of the ships thus employed, and of the Ministers of the Crown at whose disposition they were placed. and the voyages thus undertaken, and the purposes of such voyages; and whether, previously to the year 1900, there is any precedent for the utilisation of a vessel of the Royal Navy for such purposes.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, N.): In the year 1900 the Secretary of State for the Colonies was conveyed in H.M.S. "Cæsar," and in the present year the same Minister proceeded to Durban in the "Good Hope." In the present year the Secretary of State for War was conveyed from Genoa to Malta in the despatch vessel "Surprise," and from Malta to Gibraltar in the "Canopus," which was proceeding to Gibraltar on her way home. There are precedents for the conveyance in His Majesty's ships of Ministers of the Crown not connected with the Admiralty prior to the year 1900, but a practice which seems in itself reasonable and in the public interest would appear to be justified without reference to precedent.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will not the hon. Gentleman tell me what was the last precedent? Is he not aware that the precedents for conveying Ministers of the Crown in ships of war have always taken place in war time?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, Sir, I think the hon. Member is mistaken. That is not the fact.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will kindly give me a list of the precedents.

Cost of Operations in South Africa, Somaliland, and Venezuela.

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the estimated cost, up to the 31st March next, of the military and naval operations in West Africa, Somaliland, and Venezuela respectively.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon): The cost of the expedition to Kano has been met by Northern Nigeria funds. I do not anticipate that any additional charge will fall on the Imperial Exchequer beyond the existing grant-in-aid of £290,000 for 1902-3. The estimated expenditure for Somaliland from October 1st—on which date the War Office took over the military operations—until March 31st is £250,000. The expenditure incurred up to September 30th last was charged to the Somaliland Protectorate Fund. My hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty has already answered that part of the Question which refers to Venezuela.

Sir CHARLES DILKE inquired if there was any additional charge for the new 3rd Battalion of the West African Rifles mentioned in the Papers on the Kano expedition.

Mr. RITCHIE: I can only answer the Question on the Paper, but I will inquire. I understand that the expedition will not involve any extra charge on the Imperial Exchequer.

Taxation of Natives in British South Africa.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, W.R., Cleveland): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, what are the rates of taxation now paid by natives in the several parts of British South Africa.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The information for which the hon. Member asks cannot be given within the limits of an answer to a Question, but if he will move for a Return there will be no objection to furnishing it.

Venezuela.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state the date of the first intimation to the American Government of the proposed co-operation of Germany with England for exercising pressure on Venezuela.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): No formal intimation was made to the American Government in regard to the co-operation of the two Powers. Each of them, however, at different times informed the American Government that they might be compelled to resort to coercive measures against Venezuela. Before these measures were commenced the United States Government had undertaken that its representative at Caracas would take charge of British and German interests.

MR. LAMBERT: The noble Lord has not said what was the date the first intimation was given to the American Government.

LORD CRANBORNE: I have nothing to add to the statement I have read for the hon. Gentleman. No formal representation was made to the American Government with regard to the co-operation of the two Powers.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Was any informal representation made, and, if so, when?

LORD CRANBORNE: If the hon. Gentleman had listened to my answer he would have found out.

MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state whether the original proposals for Anglo-German co-operation regarding Venezuela came from His Majesty's Government or from the German Government.

LORD CRANBORNE: We were aware as far back as the beginning of the last year from the German Government that they were contemplating the necessity of resorting to measures of coercion against Venezuela. By the middle of July we had come to the conclusion that, failing redress, we might be obliged to resort to force. The first definite proposal for co-operation between the two Powers arose out of a communication by the German Ambassador, to which reference is made in Lord Lansdowne's despatch of July 23rd, No. 109 of the Bluebook.

MR. NORMAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can state the approximate cost, either total or per day, of the British naval operations against Venezuela.

MR ARNOLD-FORSTER: Until the accounts of the ships engaged in these operations have been received and examined it is impossible to say whether any, and, if so, what expenditure has been incurred over and above the normal expense of maintaining the squadron on the North America Station; but it is not anticipated that the additional expense will be large.

Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs.

MR. NORMAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state whether His Majesty's Government have in any way modified their views concerning the control of the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs in the future.

LORD CRANBORNE: The answer is in the negative.

Papers on Macedonia.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when the Papers relating to the state of Macedonia which have been promised will be presented to Parliament; and whether they will contain an indication of the views of His Majesty's Government regarding the present condition of Macedonia, and the policy they propose to follow in the present question regarding the introduction of reforms there.

LORD CRANBORNE: His Majesty's Government hope to be able to present these Papers to Parliament so that they shall be in the hands of Members in a few days. They will contain information bearing upon the points mentioned by the hon. Member.

MR. BRYCE: Does the noble Lord propose to include in the Papers some of the Consular Reports describing the state of affairs?

LORD CRANBORNE: Yes, Sir; I think so.

The Currency Question.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: On behalf of the hon. Member for Hythe, I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been drawn to the proposals formulated by the Mexican and Chinese Governments to President Roosevelt respecting the fixing of a ratio between the Mexican dollar and gold; whether His Majesty's Government have made any recommendations to China in connection with endowing that country with a national currency coin, in pursuance of one of the provisions of the recent Anglo-Chinese agreement; and whether he would lay upon the Table any correspondence of an international character bearing on these subjects.

The following Question also appeared on the Paper on the subject:—

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government to accede to President Roosevelt's suggestion that an International Conference should be held to discuss the advisability of arranging the currency difficulties existing between gold standard and silver-using countries, and if possible to fix a stable ratio of value and exchange.

*LORD CRANBORNE: I will reply to both Questions together My attention has been drawn to the proposals in question, but His Majesty's Government have not yet received any invitation to take part in a conference on the subject. His Majesty's Government have not so far made any recommendations such as are indicated in the second paragraph of the Question. We have not taken part in any international correspondence on the question.

The Income Tax.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether an inquiry has been instituted, by Departmental Committee or otherwise, into the feasibility of graduation of the Income Tax and of further extension of abatements to small incomes in pursuance of the statements of the right hon. Member for West Bristol on 11th June 1902†; and, if so, whether and when the result of such inquiry will be laid before Parliament.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg at the same time to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has taken, or intends to take, any steps to appoint the committee of experts to inquire into the practicability of graduating the Income Tax which his predecessor indicated the probability of his appointing during the debate of 11th June of last year.

MR. RITCHIE: I will answer the two Questions put to me on this subject together. The Questions deal with two points—one, the feasibility of graduation of the Income Tax, which is the point specially referred to in the Question of the hon. Member for the Elland Division of the West Riding of Yorkshire, and the other, the further extension of abatements to small incomes. The latter is merely an extension of the existing principle of abatement, which is a point deserving consideration, but not,

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† See (4) *Debates*, cix., 390.

I think, one to be referred to a Committee. No extension which has previously been made has ever been first referred to a Committee. The question of graduation stands in a very different position. It would hardly be possible for the Government to refer it to a Committee without giving ground for the belief that such an enquiry was intended as a prelude to practical changes in our fiscal system such as the hon. Member desires.

Newgate Prison—Auction of Relics.

MR. NORMAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if his attention has been called to the character of the scenes that took place at the recent auction of portions of His Majesty's late prison of Newgate, and to the fact that objects such as the prison bell, the flagstaff, the condemned criminals' seat in chapel, the fetters which hung for many years over the entrance, and other similar objects—some of historic interest—were sold for small sums for purposes of public exhibition; is he aware of the behaviour of persons in the execution shed during the sale; that other persons were seen digging for murderers' teeth and bones in the alley where executed criminals were buried; who was responsible for these arrangements; and what action, if any, he proposes to take in the matter.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine): At the time of the auction Newgate prison was in the possession of the authorities of the City of London. The building and fixtures, being no longer required for Government purposes, owing to the re-arrangement of London prisons, had been sold to the City, and handed over on 1st December last; and from that date passed out of my control. I do not think that there are any steps for me to take in the matter; but I may add that, before the prison was transferred, careful arrangements were made f r the removal and interment elsewhere of the remains of those buried within its precincts, and I have no reason to believe that these arrangements were not fully and properly carried out.

London Traffic—Street Accidents.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the question of remedial measures for the prevention of street accidents will be brought within the scope of the inquiry of the Royal Commission on London Traffic, having regard to the fact that deaths from vehicular accidents in the streets of the Metropolis have increased by 26 per cent. during the last ten years, whilst personal injuries from accidents of this description have increased from nearly 6,000 to upwards of 9,000 during the same period.

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: The terms of reference to the Royal Commission on London Traffic include the question of better provision for the organisation and regulation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. I cannot, of course, say what the Commissioners may hold to be within the scope of their inquiry, but it seems not unreasonable to suppose that it may involve the consideration of measures for the prevention of street accidents.

Wireless Telegraphy.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the Postmaster General, whether facilities will be given to the public, through the General Post Office, for the transmission of messages by wireless telegraphy to the Continent of America and elsewhere.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The effect of recent progress in the development of wireless telegraphy upon both the commercial and strategic interests of this country is now receiving the careful consideration of His Majesty's Government. I am also in communication with the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company upon the subject of their relations with the Post Office. I am not at present in a position to make any final statement upon the subject, but I have no doubt that it will be possible to secure for the public of this country the use of this method of communication when it is sufficiently developed for commercial purposes.

Agricultural Parcels Post.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he has arrived at any decision respecting an agricultural parcel post; if not, will he consider the advisability of appointing a Committee representing the various interests concerned, with a view of evolving a workable scheme.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: After carefully considering this subject I have come to the conclusion that, if any reduction were made in the rates of postage on parcels, it would not be right to restrict the reduction to parcels of agricultural produce; and at the present time I do not feel able to recommend a general reduction of parcel postage.

MR. LAMBERT: What as to appointing a Committee?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not think that that at present is desirable, but if the hon. Gentleman wishes to make any representations to me on the subject I will gladly hear him.

Fraudulent Bankruptcy.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, in view of the losses sustained by traders through the action of fraudulent bankrupts, will he consider the advisability of introducing legislation such as will allow of persons guilty of fraudulent bankruptcy being more severely punished than is now practicable under the present conditions of the law?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The subject has been under my consideration, but I am unable to promise to introduce legislation. I shall be happy to examine carefully the proposals of a Bill introduced by the hon. Member.

Housing Problem in Ireland.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork Co., Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if it is his intention to introduce into Parliament this session a Bill for the better housing of Irish artisans, rural tradesmen, fishermen, and agricultural labourers; has his attention been drawn to the present condition of the Labourers (Ireland) Acts and to their limited application; and does he propose to extend their influence and to simplify their procedure.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The question of further legislation is under consideration. At the present moment, however, I cannot make a more definite statement in the matter.

MR. SHEEHAN: Had the right hon. Gentleman's private secretary—the member for North Antrim—any authority for stating, in the course of the South Antrim election, that legislation was actually to be introduced?

Labourers' Cottages in Cork.

MR. SHEEHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the scheme for providing additional half acres to the labourers' cottages in the Cork Rural District has been sanctioned by the Local Government Board; will he state the cause of delay in sanctioning this scheme after all prescribed forms had been complied with; what is the nature of the arrangement come to between the Local Government Board and the District Council; and in what manner have the grounds of disagreement been removed?

MR. WYNDHAM: On the 9th December† I stated that the delay was occasioned by the existence of irregular tenancies. This objection has since been removed in several cases. The District Council has also undertaken to obviate grounds for similar delay in future. The Provisional Order is now about to be issued.

Irish Local Government Board—Interference with Elected Representatives.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the cases of interference by the Local Government Board in Ireland with elected representatives; whether he will take this matter into consideration, and provide a remedy by amending the Local Government Act.

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member has been good enough to send me a newspaper report, from which it appears that his Question arises out of the recent action of the Board in connection with one of the nurses at Rathdown Union Workhouse. I am making inquiry into the facts, and would ask the hon. Member to repeat the Question tomorrow.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxvi., 457.

Irish Judicial Rents.

MR. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Land Commission can state the percentage of reductions in the case of judicial rents fixed in 1886, 1887, 1888, and 1889 respectively; and what has been the percentage of reduction in the case of judicial rents fixed in 1886 and 1887 that have been brought into court for second-term judicial rents.

MR. WYNDHAM: The figures in answer to the first inquiry are 24·1, 31·3, 28·8, and 24·7 respectively. The official returns do not give information in the precise form desired in the second part of the Question. They show for each year ended 31st March the percentages of reduction in second-term rents on rents fixed for a first statutory term. But they do not distinguish between rents fixed in different years, as tenants rarely apply to have second-term rents fixed immediately on the expiry of the first term. The reductions in second-term on first term rents for the years ended March 1900, 1901 and 1902 were 23·7, 22·4 and 21 per cent. respectively.

Dillon Estate Mortgages.

MR. TULLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board can state what was the total amount of the mortgages and the yearly charge for same on the Dillon estate in Roscommon and Mayo prior to the purchase by that Board; and what were the number of years' purchase of his net income, over and above his incumbrances, that the Board paid to Lord Dillon.

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member will find the details of this purchase on page 17 of the Ninth Report of the Congested Districts Board for the year ending 31st March, 1900. Different methods of calculation give different numbers of years' purchase, and various interpretations are placed on the term net income. The salient facts are that £290,000 was paid for an estate with a gross nominal rental of £20,370, a mortgage of £40,000 at 4 per cent., annual outgoings for county cess, poor rate, drainage charge, etc., of £2,488, a charge of £997, which expired shortly after the date of purchase, and with arrears of £27,000, excluding the hanging gale.

Irish Lights.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will confer with Trinity House and communicate with the Irish Lights Board suggesting to them the necessity of placing a light and fog signal at Three Castles Head or Mizen Head, or somewhere on the southern shore of Bantry Bay, and also instruct the Board to place a light and fog signal at the west end of Rathlin, and likewise to place a fog signal at Inishtrahull; and whether he is aware of the demand for those lights and signals.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The placing of a light and fog signal at Three Castles Head or Mizen Head is under the consideration of the lighthouse authorities; it is probable that the improvement in the Fastnet Light and the communication which is about to be established between that lighthouse and the shore may have an important bearing upon the decision. The Commissioners of Irish Lights are prepared to place a light and fog signal at Rathlin Island, but the financial questions attending the heavy cost of the works have not yet been settled. It has been determined to establish a fog signal at Inishtrahull. I must point out that the Board of Trade have no power to "instruct" the lighthouse authorities to undertake specific works as suggested by the hon. Member in his Question.

The Committee of Defence.

MR ARTHUR LEE (Hants, Fareham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Army and Navy Estimates for the coming financial year have been submitted to, and reviewed concurrently by, the new Committee of Defence; and, if not, whether they will be so reviewed before being laid before this House.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): In answer to my hon. friend I have to say that the Estimates of the year could not have been revised by the Defence Committee, because the Committee was not fully organised on its new basis early in the autumn, when the broad outlines of the Estimates had to be determined. I will go further and say that in my judgment it would not be a proper use to put the Committee of Defence to, to make them go over the details of the Estimates. No doubt the work of that Committee will have a most important effect on the view which the Government take both as regards the absolute expenditure on the Army and the Navy, and the relative expenditure upon the two services; but I do not think it would be desirable that they should have cast upon them the task which properly belongs to the Minister in charge of the Department and the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR LEE: May I ask whether the relative amounts to be spent in the current year on the Navy and Army will be considered by the Committee without going into details?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have explained to my hon. friend that the Estimates for the year have to be decided in their broad lines not later than the preceding autumn, and when they were decided for the coming year the Committee of Defence had not been reorganised.

MR. BECKETT (York, N.R., Whitby): May I ask whether the Committee will regard the scheme on which the Estimates are framed with an open mind?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Committee would be perfectly useless if it did not approach every question with an open mind.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (KING'S SPEECH, MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Ordered, That the proceedings on the Address in answer to His Majesty's Speech shall, until concluded, have precedence of all other Orders of the Day and of Notices of Motion at all sittings for which they are set down.—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Question again proposed.

*MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I rise to continue the statement I began last night, when I briefly pointed out in some detail the extent of this unemployed problem, and sought to show that one method of remedying the evil was to increase the area of land under cultivation. This question of the cultivation of land has excited considerable interest among all sections of the community. The drift of the population from the land into our cities is a matter which cannot be ignored, and experience has taught us that it has brought most serious consequences to the community at large. I will trouble the House with a few figures in order to show the extent to which this evil is proceeding. According to the census of 1871, the proportion of population engaged in agriculture was 434 per 10,000 persons. In 1881 that figure had diminished to 343; ten years later it had shrunk still further to 275, and it is expected by all competent authorities that when the figures of the last census are published a further decrease will be shown in the proportion of men working on the land. I think there will be unanimity of opinion as to the importance of having the largest possible proportion of workers engaged in agriculture, because, despite all our display of wealth and the accumulation of property in various directions, it must be that the chief wealth of the nation consists in the products of the soil. No matter what the trade of a nation may be, that nation cannot be spoken of as prosperous and wealthy unless that law is observed. May I point out that in this respect Great Britain occupies the lowest position of any European country? In 1891 the proportion of persons engaged in agriculture in Great Britain was 10·4. In France, in the same year it was 44·8; in Germany in 1895 it was 39·3; in Belgium in 1890 it was 35·0; in Denmark also in the same year it was 32·1, while in the United States it was 37·2. Thus the proportion in England is lower than in any other country. It may be said that this is because land cultivation in England is not so profitable as it is in other countries. I do not dispute that statement, but I do dispute the assumption upon which it is founded that the land of England cannot be made so profitable as that of other countries.

We do not require to depend on theories in dealing with this matter because experiments have been made in different parts of England—in the North, the Midlands, and the South, with a view of ascertaining what can be done with the land under systems of culture different to those now in vogue. I am not going to-day to enter into technicalities as to the methods employed by experimentalists and theorists. I will confine myself to the practical point. Where the land has been available, and has been let to the small cultivator on reasonable terms, the result in every case has been success. Farmers paying from £3 to £4 per acre for land, and paying their labourers a weekly wage of from 11s. to 14s., are continually grumbling at the hardness of the times. Whether there is much behind that grumble I am not in a position to say, but still the complaint is continually made that they find it difficult to make the land pay. But when we turn to the small cultivators who are charged double and treble the rent, we find that they are able to make a comfortable living out of a suitable piece of land. Under the Corporation of Brighton, one labourer rents half an acre of land. His total expenditure for one year, including rent, was £11 2s. 6d., while his gross receipts for the sales of produce were £63 14s., leaving him a profit or wage, if you choose to so call it, of £52 11s. 8d. In the case of a farmer holding under a private owner, there is no inducement to increase the products of the soil in that way, because if he did so, by the inexorable operation of the law of rent, every fraction of the increased value would find its way into his landlord's pocket. But still this experiment proves that in that part of England land can be made to pay an actual annual profit of something like a hundred guineas per acre, so that it is absurd to put forward the suggestion that the land of this country is not cultivated because it will not pay. Why, even working men with their small allotments of an eighth of an acre—allotments which they cultivate in their spare hours—thus increase their incomes 2s. or 3s. weekly.

I say that the land of England is going out of cultivation because the burden of landlordism is greater than it can carry, and all incentive to effort is thereby taken away from the farmer, who knows that the result of his labours will pass into the pockets of the landowner. In France, where different conditions prevail, the land near the great cities is converted into huge market gardens and is carrying 2,500 workers to the square mile—people who are profitably employed in producing fresh vegetables for the inhabitants of the big cities—in England the land is allowed to go to waste, while people, young and old, are growing ricketty from eating wilted vegetables and canned fruits. I seek to aim at encouraging the development of a system of land cultivation, by which the 16,000,000 acres of our native land, which are now lying idle and profitless, may be turned to good account, while the unemployed labouring community is absorbed.

In this matter I am not seeking to cast reflections on the local authorities. It has been a pleasure to us to read of the sympathetic replies made by the authorities to the demands and claims of the unemployed. They have in many cases stretched the powers entrusted to them by Parliament in their endeavour to find work. But after all, this is a very unprofitable way of seeking to deal with this evil. Public works undertaken by corporations under such cases are apt to prove very costly because the men engaged on them are not trained for the special work they are called upon to perform. I would seek to enlarge the powers of these local authorities, and I would impose upon them the obligation, to be enforced by statute, to provide work in every town and parish in England for every worker who is unable to find employment in the ordinary way. It may be said that this is an Utopian idea, but I submit that it is merely the development of legislation which has already been passed by this House. We compel sanitary authorities to carry out certain regulations in the interest of the health of the community; we compel the authorities, too, to make provision for the education of the children, and on many other lines we apply compulsion in the interests of the well-being of the people. All I am seeking is that this principle should be developed sufficiently far to recognise that the able and willing man out of work is as much an object requiring State protection as is the health and well-being of the community. How is it to be done? By conferring on these local authorities power to acquire land for cultivation and to establish industries, because after all the two things go hand in hand.

It is a mistake to seek to deal with the unemployed problem through the unemployed themselves. The point is to enable each individual to find the employment for which he is best fitted. To begin to build up the reform of the land system by putting the unemployed in our towns on the land would be to foredoom the scheme to almost certain failure. But there are in the towns thousands, and tens of thousands, of men who have drifted in from the agricultural districts and who would be only too delighted to go back again. When a man once gets submerged in the ebbs and currents of city life the avenues leading back to the healthy and peaceful life of the country are to all intents and purposes closed to him. What I seek is to empower the local authorities not merely to acquire the land and to organise industries—but to cultivate the land and to establish workshops where men and women who desire to live a life apart from the strife and bustle of our competitive system may be free to retire and work for their living under a corporation. The objections to this proposal will no doubt be many, but I venture to say that the day is not far distant when, not merely for humanitarian reasons but for reasons of State, men worthy of the name of statesmen will be compelled to face this question, and to find a way by which the land of England may be made again to grow the food required for the sustenance of the people.

I know it is sometimes asserted that if the State would but forego what is called its Free Trade policy and return to Protection that would make it possible for the land of England again to be brought under cultivation. But I may remind the House that in those countries where Protection obtains, the unemployed question is just as clamant and rampant as it is at home. In Germany, where there is Protection, the unemployed problem is at this moment more acute than it is here; across the Atlantic in America, despite her prosperity and expanding trade, the Labour Department admits that there are 2,000,000 of tramps—the product of want of employment. Our Colonial legislatures have had to carry special Acts to deal with this particular evil, and there, though there are hundreds and thousands of square miles waiting to be cultivated, the unemployed problem is as clamant as it is at home. Therefore, Protection would be no remedy for lack of employment, neither can overpopulation be said to be the cause of it.

Surely this House of Commons exists to make new departures, if necessary, in the interests of the well-being of the community. I hope that no hon. Member or supporter of the Government will advance the argument of this proposal being a new and dangerous innovation or a new departure. If we can have an advisory board to assist with the organisation of the Army, it is no great violation of that same principle to establish a Labour Department for the organisation of the industries of the nation. Surely the tax upon corn is a departure from the principles which have guided this country for at least half a century. If the House of Commons can make a departure of that kind, can it be very wrong to make a similar departure in the case of people who are out-of-work? It may be said that an experiment of this kind would involve cost. I admit that it cannot be done without involving an expenditure of money, and a certain amount of risk, but there is ample precedent to justify us in pressing forward this demand. We are spending £5,600,000 upon the building of a railway through Uganda, ostensibly in the interests of the natives of that country. The sum of £60,000 a year has gone to subsidise steamship lines to enable them to hold their own against the competition of the American Shipping Combination. If money can be used for these purposes, surely it can be used to protect the manhood of the nation. The well-being of the community cannot long be guaranteed if something is not done. The curse of the poor is their poverty. The presence of the degrading, demoralising, poverty with which we are so familiar in the midst of so much wealth, breaks down the moral stimulus and the mental fibre of those who are accursed by it. I say—and I say it advisedly — that I regret that these people should be quiet and long-suffering, because if they insisted more upon the duty of the State towards them more would be done, and the longer they continue to be quiet the longer will they be compelled to suffer.

I want to quote one authority which hon. Gentlemen opposite will be inclined to treat with considerable respect. In the year 1895 the question of the unemployed was rampant, and even worse than it is now. At that time hon. Gentlemen sitting on this side of the House were in office, and those sitting opposite were then in Opposition, and were doubtless anxious to take office. The Marquess of Salisbury, speaking at Bradford on the 23rd of May in that year, said—

> "You know how the difficulty of the unemployed is rising. In the south there are vast masses of men who have no evil will, against whom no harm can be stated, who have only this one wish, this one demand — that the labour which they are prepared to give should be accepted, and bare sustenance given them in place of it; and to whom it has been found necessary, from sheer want of employment to give them, to return a disappointing answer.
>
> "Just look at the state of things that is exhibited in the London markets at this moment. Money is so plentiful that you can hardly get money for it. It is overflowing in all the coffers of the capitalists and all the banks. On the other side there are the sullen ranks of the half-starved labourers, who, if that money could be employed, could be invested, would be enjoying an unrestricted industry and a happy home."

As was the case then so is it now. Money is again plentiful, labour is again clamouring for an opportunity to exert its power in exchange for a bare subsistence. Land is lying idle and going to waste for lack of labourers to cultivate it. The solution of the unemployed problem consists in bringing the idle land, the idle capital, and the idle labourers together. When these three elements exist and are going to waste surely it should not be beyond the power of British statesmanship to bring these three elements together in profitable union, and thereby provide honourable work for all honest men.

That is the extent of the demand which I make. Local authorities and the Government should be invested with full powers to acquire land, to have it put into cultivation, to establish industries, and to generally organise the workless and the idle land of England, so as to bring about the time when poverty, with all its concomitant attendants of vice, crime, and misery, shall only remain as a black dream of a bitter past. I beg to move the Amendment standing in my name.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea), in seconding the Motion, said: My hon. friend the Member for Merthyr Tydvil has told the short and simple annals of the workless worker, and with facts and figures and suggestions he has asked the House of Commons to direct its attention to some means by which the sad processions of the unemployed in all our cities can be removed, and by which men would be prevented from the degrading taint of pauperism by having, as a substitute, work found for them on the land. I know that my hon. friend will receive, probably from each side of the House, criticism for some of the suggestions and remedies which he has advanced. The House of Commons exists for suggestions. It exists for criticism, and from both suggestions and criticism legislation sometimes happily comes. This I can say, that my hon. friend may congratulate himself on the fact, that there have been very few suggestions advanced in recent years so full of work, if the Government wishes work, as those which he has advanced. It is not necessary for us to subscribe to all his suggestions, or to one or two of his theories, but we sympathise with the main theme of his speech and the main current of his intentions, because he has expressed what all of us feel, that the time has arrived when the House of Commons, especially after a long and costly war, should withdraw its energies and attention from the circumference of the Empire to the Empire's heart, and see the condition of our Outlanders at home; I venture to say, poor though they be, weak though they are, demoralised though some of them may be, to me they are more pathetic figures than the patriots slobbering over their soup in Johannesburg hotels, or prancing down the main streets of Pretoria, earning but little themselves, but luxuriating in the happy possession of other people's money.

It is not an accident that after a war the unemployed question should come up, for it invariably follows, you cannot have the wicked, wanton waste that war involves without its reaction and its consequent suffering at home. I know no more pathetic sight than the procession of these unemployed men, some of them Army Reserve men who have had to pawn their medals in order to get a meal for their wives and children. No suggestions of altering our fiscal policy, or adopting here and there some minor remedy, will ever remove or partially palliate this evil. The House of Commons has got to recognise that if we are the greatest assembly of legislators in the world, with England in this condition it is our duty to do something to alter this state of things as soon as possible.

What has my hon. friend put forward? He put forward the other day the reclamation of land on the sea coast. The reclamation of the sea coast is very good, but reclamation of Governments is much better. I subscribe to all he said as to the advisability of reclaiming derelict land in Lincolnshire or Essex, or on the estuary of the Wash. I subscribe to what he said in regard to the reafforestation of this country, which could be done, not as a matter of cost to the taxpayer, but a mere matter of book-keeping, which other countries initiated and successfully adopted.

But before this reclamation and reafforestation takes place — and they are rather remote for the unemployed in our streets at the present time—we have to devise some means by which land, which is now derelict, shall be brought into cultivation as soon as possible. It is sad when one goes through this beautiful country of ours—in many respects a much better country to look at than the countries to which too many Englishmen are fond of going—to see what has resulted from the neglect of the land question. It has almost ruined Ireland, and personally I am prepared to vote for almost anything that will restore to the Irish labourer that instalment of economic justice which my friend the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil wants for the English who are out-of-work. It has also depopulated Scotland, it is depleting rural Wales, and it is making England a warren or a playground where it is not a game preserve. This cannot go on much longer, and we have to devise means by which we can turn the current back from the town to the country and so prevent what we see in the towns — overcrowding either of the overworked or of men who have no work at all.

This is a condition of things that does not reflect credit on our sentiment, our intelligence, or our capacity, and I ask hon. Members all round me whether they are not willing to vote millions to deal with a bog in the Soudan or to fill up an embankment on the Zambesi. There is not a river in Egypt they will not dam at any cost. I have the advantage of having been an engineer, and I give that phrase its correct interpretation. There is not in Egypt an irrigation scheme that will not find advocates for the expenditure of Government money upon it. When I take up the papers every morning I read of loans suggested to rescue derelict millionaires in South Africa. It is £35,000,000 today, and it is £65,000,000 tomorrow. When I see all these sums coming out of poor John Bull's pocket I am inclined to button up my pocket and say charity ought to begin at home. The time has arrived when much of the money that is spent in Africa, north, east, south and west, might be profitably employed nearer our own doors.

The excuse for spending all this money has been that we have got a large and growing population, and that we want new markets. What folly! Your best market for shoemakers is on the bootless feet of the children of Manchester; your largest market for tailors is on the hungry forms that are going half clothed through

Glasgow, Birmingham, Bootle, and other towns. If you want a market for food stuffs, in this ragged regiment of unemployed you have work for the miller and the baker. I hope that no Member will get up and try to evade the real issue of the Resolution by caviling about the number. What does it matter if there are 100,000 or 500,000 men out of work ? If there are 10,000 honourable working men out-of-work that is the measure of our duty to them. If figures are to be used, I do want to quote from the President of the Local Government Board's own report on the subject of pauperism, which is the best test of unemployment. I find in the December report, containing the statistics for the fourth quarter of 1902, that the number of paupers was greater than it has been at any previous period since 1871. There is no poetry or romance about Poor Law statistics, and I say that these figures prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that poverty is with us, that the unemployed exist, and that remedies have to be found. What, in round figures, is the number of the army for whom my hon. friend has been the eloquent champion today ? Roughly, it is more by 100,000 than the total number of men that were engaged for three years in the South African war. Like Mercutio's wound—

> "'t is not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church door, but 't is enough."

I venture to say that we could not spend our high income-tax on anything better than the devising of means by which these poor fellows could secure work. Now the question is how is that to be done ? I am far too fair a man, and my hon. friend is far too fair a man, to throw the responsibility of this problem of the unemployed wholly on the President of the Local Government Board. But for the moment he is in office. His is the responsibility. Statistics and criticisms are submitted to him, and, primarily, his duty as President of the Local Government Board is to grapple with this problem in one way or another. He will probably say that he does not deal with this to the extent that is popularly believed. Well, that is not altogether so, because I found information on attending a conference of local authorities in London the other day, the practicality of which agreeably surprised me on this subject. I found that there was a disposition on the part of Boards of Guardians, and even the Charity Organisation Society delegates, to do something practical if it were possible for them to do so. When the Charity Organisation Society is in favour of helping the unemployed, then things have reached a pretty pass—for I have always regarded that organisation as one that looks upon charity as the eighth deadly sin. The Boards of Guardians and the County Councils would like to do something, but they have the suspicion that if they move out of the beaten track of the stiff routine of the unsympathetic Poor Law, they will either be surcharged, or disallowed, or objected to. Now it is the business of the President of the Local Government Board—I trust he will not give an unsympathetic reply—to do his best to see that, if the local authorities are willing to act up to the best of their power and ability, no obstacle is thrown in the road. It will do a great deal of good if the President of the Local Government Board will let these local authorities know that if they are willing to do something they will not be kept back by a centralised Department, which at times goes further, I think, than it should in restraining the local authorities.

I want to point out the danger of allowing things to drift. To the credit of the British people, speaking broadly, they do not as a rule go to prison, and they dread the workhouse more than anything. It is creditable also that they should liken the co-ordinate action of the central Poor Law authority and the local bodies to the spasmodic charity money which is subscribed in response to what may be called the street-begging efforts of these poor fellows. It does a great deal of harm. The fact is that the money is wasted and cruel damage is inflicted. The result is that the impostor, the loafer, the charlatan, and the mere demagogue profits and exploits this particular situation. The way to differentiate the loafer from the honest worker is by one test alone, and that is the test of work. If private enterprise cannot give him that test, then that test ought to be applied by some one.

A worse feature than the inactivity of local Boards of Guardians and Town Councils, and the indifference of the Central Department is the very dangerous thing that is growing up in the large towns and cities, namely, the ambitious and advertising person who exploits the unemployed movement — soup kitchens here, and coals and blankets there, frequently to the detriment of abler men with smaller purses. The result is what I saw the other day in the East End of London. I saw children at a soup kitchen, the mother at a mission room, and the father in the unemployed procession, cadging in the streets of London. How can you expect anything but a race of paupers from this? The mother ought to be at home, the children ought to be at school, the man ought to be taken out of the unemployed procession, and, if physically fit, he ought to be provided with work in some way or another. If he refused to work I would give him a job "climbing up the golden stairs" in Pentonville Prison. Why can something not be done? The trades unions, these much vilified bodies, are doing much. I suppose the trades unions will have spent this year nearly £500,000 on unemployed benefit to over 1,500,000 of members. These organisations have no right, I think, to assume unduly the responsibilities of the ratepayers and taxpayers. This ought to be taken into account when these organisations are being attacked.

The friendly societies are almost unable to bear the great strain put upon them, and if drastic and permanent remedies cannot be submitted to us, there is no reason why the Boards of Guardians, the local authorities, and the Local Government Board should not at this moment, while considering the larger questions, do something for the immediate relief of these people. There are works of a sanitary and improving character that the local authorities ought either to be compelled or asked to do. For instance, I know no street so badly paved as Victoria Street, Westminster, between here and Victoria Station. I would suggest to the President of the Local Government Board, now that the indoor and outdoor paupers are more in number than they have been for forty-two years, that he should re-issue the circular which was issued in 1892 calling upon the local authorities to at once commence sanitary works and local improvements. By this means hundreds and thousands of men in town and country could get immediate employment, and the great advantage of this action would be that all the districts simultaneously and universally would contribute their quota to the common stock in providing a remedy for the unemployed. If one district goes ahead of another the result may be that the willing horse will be unduly burdened. I believe that as the proportion of paupers in London, and in the country generally, is greater than in 1892 this circular should be re-issued. Incidentally I may say that if my hon. friend the Member for Merthyr Tydvil had addressed his mind to that circular, he would have found in it some of the most striking arguments in confirmation of the views he has put forward. For instance, it advocates that money might be spent on employing men in spade husbandry on sewage farms. I could not help thinking, when I looked at the faces of hon. Gentlemen opposite, that what is but a choleric word in the mouth of a Local Government Board, is rank blasphemy in the mouth of the municipal authorities. But why confine the spade husbandry to sewage farms when other kinds of farm labour might be offered?

The circular goes on to mention the laying out of open spaces, recreation grounds, disused burial grounds — here would be a fine opportunity of burying the last of the Jingoes—the cleaning and paving of unpaved streets, sewage works and works of water supply. Now, if that circular had been re-issued, as it should have been, last November, I believe that a great number of men in these processions would have had decent work. I want to make another suggestion, which I hope will be carried out by the Local Government Board—at any rate they should be encouraged to do so. I do not, for the life of me, see why we should have these unemployed if the spending departments paid attention to the labour market when large contracts are being given out. Except in war time, or in times of national emergency, when men work night and day, and all normal conditions are set aside, I do not see why contracts for ships, engines and guns, and the like, on which millions of pounds are spent, should be given out at a time when the private labour market is working overtime and is so busy. It ought to be possible for Government work to be adapted to the exigencies of depressed labour in private yards, and instead of working overtime in the summer, Government work should be provided in winter. The present system is not as it used to be. In the large cities the municipal authorities are adapting their work to the exigencies of private work, and the fact is that that helps private work enormously. I will give a concrete illustration. There are 500 board schools in London. Is there any reason why they should be painted between April and June, when every part of the West End is clamouring for painters? There is not. The schools might just as well be painted in the months from October to February. And this illustration applies to fire-stations, and a hundred and one other municipal institutions.

I now come to a point to which I ask the attention of the President of the Local Government Board. What do the Poor Law Boards who are responsible in the matter do? When a man does not work, if he is a drunkard or a lazy person, he can, as a last resource, fall back on State funds. But destitution is the only test; and he has to comply with some standard. He is given work, if he is an able-bodied man. What kind of work? Oakum picking in a cell, or stone breaking under demoralising conditions in a yard. Disfranchisement accompanies that work, whether the man is an honest workman or a wastrel. He has frequently to break up his home, his wife is separated from him and placed in another branch of the same institution. I would rather have the man breaking stones on the public road with his wife and family at home than in the workhouse, with perhaps the old father in the infirmary, and probably costing far more than would be given to the man. The fact is that the unemployed ought to be kept in one of three capacities—either as a pauper, a criminal, or a workman. As a pauper he is costly, as a criminal he is enormously costly, and I prefer to keep him at work, on the land or elsewhere, and so prevent him becoming a pauper, and save him from the demoralisation which lack of work produces.

My next point refers to the War Office. We have got 100,000 militiamen in this country; and, on the whole, I think that the militiamen are perhaps as good a section of our national forces as any other, if not the best. [HON. MEMBERS: Oh! Oh!] At least that is my view. We have used them in the recent war, and they have always stood by the country when we have been in a tight place. But what does the War Office do? When builders and scaffolders and painters are fully engaged, and when trade generally is busy between the months of April and June—when all the men ought to be on the buildings doing work for which they are qualified, the Militia are called out. What is that for? Is it to suit the exigencies of Society, of which our Army is supposed to be an appanage, and sometimes the perquisite? These men ought to be at their work earning wages for themselves and profits for their employers. They ought to be called out at that time of the year when most of them are out of work, and when their services would be paid for and they could do good to everybody. The Volunteers and Naval Reserve should be dealt with in precisely the same way. If that were done the militiamen would like it. Of course, some of the officers may not. We spend £30,000,000 a year on our Army, of which the Militia is an important part. The Army exists for the interests of the country, and the officers should exist for the interests of the country. The officers should remember that the Army, including the officers, is for the nation, and the Militia should be called out between October and February.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): Would the hon. Member advocate the calling out of the Militia and putting them under canvas in the depth of winter?

MR. JOHN BURNS: That is not necessary, because if you visit Salisbury Plain, where I have been lately, you will find the tin huts there are absolutely empty, and bricklayers, builders, scaffolders and the like would not hesitate to go down at the present moment, providing that you sent with them more adaptable officers than they sometimes get.

My next point is co-operation between

the Poor Law authorities and the Town Councils. May I put it to the President of the Local Government Board, that supposing a town of 50,000 inhabitants is confronted with a number of men out of work, on the basis of the Poor Law expenditure of last year the Poor Law authority would have to spend from £5,000 to £10,000 on out-door relief. Is it not better that the Chairman of the Board should say to the Town Council: "Cannot you devise some means of providing work for these men in repairing the roads, sweeping the streets and sweetening up the place," and that £5,000 should be spent on that in the winter months, instead of waiting till these men became paupers when the same amount of money would be spent on unproductive labour? I believe that such co-operation should be encouraged, and that the Local Government Board should bring pressure to bear on the local authorities in that direction.

My last point is roughly this: I believe that the recent unemployed processions, bad though some of them were, and composed almost entirely of unemployables, mixed up with a few wastrels, have brought home to this big city the fact that the unemployed problem requires to be dealt with. What is better, it has brought home to some hon. Members that as long as we can afford to spend so much money on war, and waste so much money on drink, we ought not to allow these men to sink deeper and deeper in the social abyss for lack of health, and, if need be, for lack of money. I support my hon. friend the Member for Merthyr Tydvil in his drastic remedies. I would prevent men from coming to the city, but when they are in the city they should be provided for. But whether in the country or the city, whether in work or out of work, the wicked waste that ensues from this gigantic expenditure of 160,000,000 of money on drink, is enough to make all of us shudder at the misery which it involves. The unemployed themselves have got to be weaned, when in work, from this deadly habit; and above all we must remember the fact that there are thousands of men who, even if they do not drink or smoke, have wages so low that when want of employment comes along they have nothing but starvation in front of them, or the Poor Law office. We have got to recognise that cheap, low-paid labour is dear labour for the manufacturers, the workmen, and the community. We have got to find a more excellent way than the present, whereby from 20 to 30 per cent. of the workmen in this city, even when in work, are below the poverty line. We must give wages that will be spent on better houses and fruitful commodities. Wages must receive such a dead lift that every man should have a margin to tide him over when stranded for lack of employment. These are a few of the remedies which I bring forward, in addition to those mentioned by the hon. Member who introduced the Amendment. I believe, from the practical experience of one of the administrators of one of the biggest affairs in Municipal Government, that much good might be done by adopting these remedies, and no harm done. I ask the President of the Local Government Board, now that we are no longer engaged in Imperial struggles, to remember that these unemployed men, these ragged regiments of the workless army, are our fellow citizens. Above all, let us realise that the worst thing we can do to any man is to keep him idle, and the next worst is to send him to a workhouse. If we keep him idle he drifts to the workhouse, and then to the gaol, alternated by the fœtid lodging houses that crowd our large cities and which some of the unemployed should be employed in pulling down. There have been scores of suggestions from different points of view. My hon. friend deserves thanks and credit for having brought this subject before the House; and now there is an object lesson of 500,000 workless men before us, I trust the President of the Local Government Board will take the initiative that is desired, will co-operate with the local authorities where practicable, and, above all, will tell the local authorities that either in the purchase of land or in any other remedial measures the Local Government Board will not restrain them but give them the experience, inspiration and advice it is the duty of his Department to extend.

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But we desire humbly to express our regret that Your Majesty's Advisers have not seen fit to recommend the inclusion therein of such measure or measures as would have empowered the Government and local administrative authorities to acquire land for cultivation, and to set up undertakings whereby men and women unable to find employment in the ordinary labour market might be profitably set to work.' "—(*Mr. Keir Hardie.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr JESSE COLLINGS, Birmingham, Bordesley) said that perhaps he might be allowed to occupy the attention of the House for a short time, as this was a question in which he had always been deeply interested. He listened with great attention to the speech of the hon. Member who moved the Amendment, and although he by no means accepted his figures—no doubt sincerely given—yet there was no doubt that there was a large and increasing number of unemployed in this country. The cause was not far to seek. For years past there had been a steady migration from the country to the towns and industrial districts, which some years ago had reached the limit of their power of absorption and were now dangerously overcrowded. In the meantime it is quite true, as had been stated, that the land to a large extent remained uncultivated. Hence arose the great social problem which they tried to meet by housing and other palliatives of one kind or another. But they were only palliatives. f they were to provide for 1,000 persons today in London, within a few months the tide would flow into the city and make things just as bad as they were before. As to the hon. Member's remedies, he would pass over Socialism, on which the hon. Member laid great stress, as the remedy. Socialism meant putting the manufacture and distribution of everything into the hands of the community; if it were adopted, it would destroy the mainspring of progress by sinking all individual effort. He admitted, however, that the doctrine of Socialism was largely on the increase in this country. There were people who were always ready to listen to anything with a promising sound; and in the history of progress suffering and discontent were always found to be the motive power of almost every reform. England was the very ground for such a doctrine. The hon. Member was altogether in error in what he said with regard to Socialism in Germany and France. Outside the large towns in these countries it had made no single step. And why? Because it was met by millions of men who had got something; but in England they had a proletariat to which there was no semblance in any other country in the world. That was what made the question so important. The hon. Member's next remedy was the reclamation of land. He had seen great schemes of reclamation which had been both economically and socially successful, but they could not be carried out by the casual labourer. There was no use in putting a jeweller or a worker in the production of luxurious articles on work of that sort. What was wanted in this case was to give work to the workshops. Those schemes had been invariably carried out by private enterprise.

As to public works he would not dwell upon that remedy, as it was only a palliative, and not what they wanted. The third suggestion of the hon. Member was that the local authorities should acquire land for cultivation. Here the hon. Member was on firm, sound, and economic principles, and he himself entirely agreed with him. He would, however, recall to the House that the hon. Member, and also the hon. Member for Battersea, who repeated the demand, were asking the Government to do what had already been done, and done very effectively. It was now twenty years ago, since he had the honour of introducing what was called a Small Holdings Bill. He was bound to say that from 1880 to 1886—he did not mention the period to raise any feeling, because it was not a Party question in the general sense — he could get no attention whatever paid to the measure. It was quite true that its necessity and importance were not recognised then as they were today. But in 1889-90, the Government of the day passed a Small Holdings Act giving the local authorities full and effective powers to do the very thing which hon. Members now desired, and its administration was placed in the hands of the County Councils. You can bring a horse to the water but you cannot make him drink; and, with the exception of two or three, the County Councils of the country ignored that measure almost completely. Should not, then, the arguments of the hon. Members be addressed to the local authorities? There were, however, exceptions. In Worcestershire, the Chairman of the County Council saw the importance of the Act, both from an economic and a social point of view; and, the Council agreeing with him, it was put into operation some years ago. The first venture was the purchase of a farm of about 300 acres. Two farmers in succession who had held the farm had failed, and when a farmer failed it was always the fault of the land; he never dreaming that, quite possibly, he might be wanting in ability, industry or capital. That farm was cut up into small holdings, and what was the result? Years ago misery, destitution and starvation existed in that district, and many people were on outdoor relief. Today there was not a man or a woman on the rates, and there was a thriving, prosperous, contented, and happy colony.

This session he hoped to introduce a Bill to remedy some of those defects. What he desired to point out was that these people were not employed but employers of labour. On one of these small holdings, say of fifteen acres, there was more manure put on to the land in one year than was ever put on the whole estate of 300 acres by the farmer, and there was more labour employed. From accounts kept by one of these men, who farmed twenty-nine acres, he was able to inform the House that in the year 1891 that man paid more than £250 for labour, not reckoning the labour of himself and family, but hard cash down, to employees, and he received from the produce of that small holding £600. This man, a few years ago, was a poor labourer who came to Birmingham to offer his services, which nobody wanted, he now came into Birmingham to the same people and offered his produce which everybody wanted. Today these people kept their ponies and carts and took produce of almost every description to the towns. This man made £600 in a year; he did not put that money into a stocking, but laid it out in spades, shovels, clothing and all requirements, thereby affording employment in the workshops instead of competing with the labour there. It might be asked: "If this was repeated would all do the same?" He had no hesitation in answering yes, because the home markets were the best markets in the world, and, setting aside such articles as corn and meat, and confining themselves to the smaller articles of food, for the production of which, in his opinion, this country was perhaps better suited than any other country in Europe, he found that the trade in them was £56,000,000.

He was sometimes amused, when he heard Members of this House and members of Chambers of Commerce lament over the fact that a bridge had come from America, or that a few tons of girders had come from Belgium amounting in all perhaps to £200,000; but not a word was said about this £60,000,000 spent on imports of food which this country could and ought to produce as well as it could produce girders. There were many Members of the House honourably engaged as citizens in local government as members of County Councils, and the main object of his speech to-day was to ask them to do as Worcestershire and some other counties had done. Do their best to put this Act into operation. It lay to their hands, was effective, and they wanted no further legislation except in a few minor details, which he hoped to prevail on the House to accept. It was said there was no demand. Of course there was not. Peasant proprietary in this country had been described as a lost art. But the supply would create a demand, and there were scores, hundreds, thousands in our big towns who would only be too glad at the present time to go back to the land. There was no demand, so far as he knew, in 1870 among the uneducated for education. But the country at large thought for the public good it was necessary, and, demand or no demand, we gave it.

The other objection was that we set up men in business in one class of trade. His answer to that was that there was no other business like that of the land; there was nothing to compare with it. It was the source, origin, and maintenance of every other trade going. As the hon. mover had said, trade of every kind depended on the purchasing power of the land, and though we might be interested in the purchasing power of the land in foreign countries, we must be equally interested in the increase of the purchasing power of Worcestershire, Dorset, and other parts of England. If they got £1 more out of the land today than they did yesterday, that was £1 more to be spent in the workshops. Therefore, for the good of the country, economically as well as socially, members of our County Councils ought at once to take up this beneficial Act. The landowners were as deeply interested in this question as anybody. Why was land going begging at £20 and £30 an acre when poor and inferior land in Belgium and in Scotland was realising £80, £90, £100, and even £120 an acre and difficult to get at that? This was surely a subject for thought among the landowners from that point of view. Then the farmer was crying out for labour and good years, but the old days when the agricultural labourer began life almost from his cradle, and continued working to his grave as a mere wage-earner, with no hope before him, had, he thanked God, gone. They had been given what was called education in the rural schools, and, at any rate, enough had been given to make the agricultural labourers profoundly dissatisfied with their lot, and he rejoiced at it. They went away to better themselves, and they would continue to do so unless, in addition to their wage-earning, they were given the opportunity to acquire an occupation of their own with some prospect attached to it, and this was denied them in the country. When there was a traditional state of things which had been handed down for so long, it was difficult to alter it, but the farmer would have to accommodate himself to different relations with his labourers than had subsisted hitherto. He would have to look upon his labourer, not as a dependent upon him, but as a neighbour.

He had been in Germany, France, Belgium, and other places, and he could assure the farmers of this country that the great source of labour and help to the farmers of those countries was the small proprietors. In Germany, with its 18,000,000 acres of cultivated land, the great mass of it was in holdings of less than fifty acres, and the farmers there could not get on without these small holders. The sooner the farmer adapted himself to that state of things the better. If he could not so adapt himself, a new race would have to spring up from the class of which he had spoken. The large farmer could not produce the £56,000,000 worth of small articles of food to which reference had been made; he could not if he would, and he would not if he could; it meant hard work, early rising, and small gains. What was required was not new legislation, but that existing Acts should be put in force. The Government could go no further except to make the few small amendments he had suggested. Let the system be adopted by degrees. There was ample room on the land for at least 1,000,000 families, to the profit and honour of the country, and their own good. Everybody was concerned in this matter. By trade and commerce a nation might get rich and prosperous, but there was no guarantee of permanency. There could not be found in history a nation whose fighting and resisting power remained, except it were based on a numerous and contented rural population.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, W.R., Cleveland) said the remedy of small holdings was not calculated directly and immediately to meet the existing need. The business of the small holder required so much skill and technical knowledge, that to take men from the towns and place them on the land, and expect them to make an independent livelihood, would be as absurd as to set a briefless barrister, or an unoccupied journalist, to the work of an engineer or doctor. It was undoubtedly the case, however, that small holdings might indirectly be of service in helping to solve the question by keeping the labourers on farms from migrating to the towns, and he hoped that the Bill the right hon. Gentleman was to introduce would so amend the Small Holdings Act as to place the power of acquiring small holdings in the hands of the Parish rather than of the County Councils, and also introduce the "blessed principle of compulsion." In fourteen years only about 1,000 acres had been obtained under the Small Holdings Act, introduced by the right hon. Gentleman. In discussing this question, it was not necessary to prove the existence of serious and exceptional distress. Whether the number of unemployed was 250,000, or 500,000 or 750,000 did not affect the necessity for finding a solution of the problem. Taking the country as a whole, he did not believe there was more distress at the present time than was usual at this period of the year, although in particular districts and industries the distress was certainly much greater. Every winter a large number, and in times of depression a vast number, were out of work. Nor was it of importance whether the recent processions in London consisted mainly of wastrels or of deserving unemployed. Such processions could always be organised if the trouble were taken. Even though all the men belonged to the category of the unemployable, the fact remained that there were always a vast number of others who were out of work through no fault of their own. Obvious causes were at work which must inevitably throw men out of employment. Not only was it the duty of the House, for the sake of the men themselves, to take such steps as were practicable to afford some relief to these individuals, but it was expedient from a national point of view so to do. These men through worklessness were often driven to recklessness and drink; their characters in the long run sadly deteriorated, with the result that a return to the ranks of high-class labour was almost impossible. The suggestions he desired to make were four in number.

An attempt must be made to discriminate between deserving and undeserving persons, and that could only be done by the test of labour. Charity should not be adopted as a remedy, but the remedy should be work for wages. The work given should not be of a permanent character, for this would keep labour away from the ordinary routes of industry, and in that case the remedy would fail of its object; the wages offered would have to be lower, consequently, than the wages paid in the ordinary labour market. The question of the practicability of planting vacant land with trees had been brought before the Board of Agriculture, and a Committee had reported that there were large areas of waste land in Britain which were eminently suited for the planting of trees. This country imported £20,000,000 worth of timber every year, the whole of which might be grown upon our soil. The Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture had reported that there were 21,000,000 acres of land in this country out of cultivation upon a large part of which afforestation could be undertaken. In the year 1887, a Select Committee reported in the same sense. In almost every other country it is admitted that the control of the forests is one of the natural functions of the State, and the development of forests one of the most convenient means of increasing the national wealth. England had the largest area of land which was not put to profitable use, and the smallest area of forest land of any country in Western Europe. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bordesley remarked that such schemes as had been suggested ought to be carried out by private enterprise, but in his opinion this question of afforestation was a matter which ought to be undertaken by the State and not by private enterprise. Private enterprise could not wait until forests yielded a return.

The suggestion he would throw out in dealing with this question of the unemployed was that a small permanent Commission should be appointed to investigate what districts of the country were suited for afforestation; and after that, if the scheme was found to be practicable, to obtain land and employ men sent by Boards of Guardians for the special work of planting and maintaining such forests. Dr. Schlich, the greatest living expert upon this subject, had stated that if 6,000,000 acres were planted in England not only would it give employment to vast numbers of working men in planting trees, but after the trees were grown this quantity of land would give continuous employment to 100,000 labourers. If part of this work could be reserved for the unemployed in bad times it would be most useful. It was not suggested that such work would be suited to all classes of the unemployed, but there was a very large class to whom this work would be practicable if the Government would consider the suggestion which had been pressed upon them from many quarters of the country. Even if this scheme entailed some cost it would be money well spent if it relieved the degradation that came from unemployment.

The relief works which were hurriedly

undertaken were frequently costly, and if undertaken in one district only, attracted men to that particular spot. The majority of the Royal Commission on Labour recommended that public authorities might, in prosperous times, prepare land for works which were needed but which were not urgent, and hold them in readiness for times of depression. He should like the right hon. Gentleman to tell them whether he was prepared to press this upon local authorities. This practice was general in India, where the Government had always ready large schemes for giving employment, which were not urgent works but which were put into operation in times of famine. With regard to labour bureaux it was exceedingly desirable to increase the mobility of labour. Very often there was a demand for labour in one spot and a surplus in another. In several of their colonies the State had established labour bureaux, stretching over the whole country, which enabled workmen to find out where the demand for labour was. They existed in Australia and New Zealand, and, in a modified form, in the United States, France, and Switzerland. He thought it would be possible to establish a national system of labour bureaux in connection with the town halls in large towns, and in the post offices in smaller towns and villages so that working men might obtain information whether labour was needed in their own district or some other part of the country. In this way it might be possible to obtain information as to the need for workmen in our colonies and in other parts of the world. Labour bureaux existed already in some of the Metropolitan boroughs, but their usefulness depended upon their number and intercommunication. If such social machinery were set up it would do much to relieve the feeling of disappointment and despair engendered in the minds of the unemployed in their blind and vain search for work.

His next suggestion related to penal farm colonies for vagrants. There had been a demand for such colonies from several Boards of Guardians, and the Local Government Board had been petitioned to this effect. Such colonies existed in Holland, where there were in one colony 2,700 deliberate vagrants detained and set to useful agricultural work and other occupations. In Merxplas in Belgium there was an institution where 2,800 people were detained and compelled to work upon the land. These men were sentenced to these colonies by orders from the magistrates, and they were detained for periods varying from two to seven years. If such institutions were established in this country they would do much to prevent these deliberate idlers and wastrels becoming burdens on the ratepayers in workhouses or on the taxpayers in prisons. Unquestionably there were many difficulties in the way of all these proposals, and disadvantages might be alleged to any scheme, but surely there were also disadvantages in leaving things as they were.

The problem before them was a very real and grave one, and the Government ought to approach these suggestions rather with a desire to take action than in a spirit of hostile criticism. He pleaded for the appointment of a Royal Commission on this question of the unemployed to examine the various suggestions which had been made. There was a Committee appointed in 1895, the labours of which were interrupted by the dissolution of that year, but the Committee was subsequently reappointed and it reported in 1896. None of the matters, however, which he had brought before the House were even considered by that Committee, with the sole exception of relief works. When he asked a Question on this subject last session the First Lord of the Treasury replied that the time was not ripe for taking the course suggested. Surely in a matter of this kind it was better to take time by the forelock and make inquiries now in order that practical schemes might be devised which could be set on foot when depression became seriously and gravely acute. He would implore the Government not to dismiss this matter lightly, but to grant at least the Commission of Inquiry for which he pleaded. If the House found by this or some other method a solution for this grave difficulty they would have done something to gain the affection of some of the most deserving of our countrymen, and erected a monument to their glory which would never perish.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): The hon. Members who have preceded me have laid before the House the most difficult of all the difficult social problems which are now before us for solution. I think they have stated the case perfectly correctly. There is no doubt that within a very short distance of this House there are persons who are habitually starving, who are unable to obtain work even if they are desirous of doing so, and particularly the kind of work they are desirous to obtain. Whenever a slight depression of trade or a spell of cold weather takes place their misery becomes acute and distressing. It is no answer to that to say that some of those persons are imposters. Of course some are imposters. Whenever public compassion is excited there are people in the metropolis of London who take advantage of it for the purpose of serving their own ends. It is no answer to say that some of them are undeserving, because undeserving people have deserving wives and families who share their starvation, and undeserving people have a right to live and to be fed as well as the deserving. It is no answer to say that hon. Members have exaggerated the number. I do not think myself that they have, but even if they have exaggerated the number, and even if half are in the condition described, it is a condition of things that urgently demands the attention of Government and of Parliament. But although this social disease is well known, and has formed the subject of discussion by philanthropists and philosophers for years, nobody has ever yet succeeded in devising a real and satisfactory remedy. I think it was the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil who reminded the House that just eight years ago, before the present Government came into office, this question of the unemployed was in one of those acute phases. A Committee of the House was then appointed to consider and report on the question, and so urgent was the case thought to be at the time that the Committee was desired to make an interim Report and to say what immediate steps should be taken to relieve the very acute distress which at that time prevailed. That Committee was composed of the very best men on the two sides of the House. It applied itself with great earnestness to the work, examined a great number of witnesses, and gave most close attention to the subject. What was the result? It made an interim Report to say that nothing could be immediately done. There was no measure that they could suggest likely at once to relieve the distress and to be acceptable to the two Houses of Parliament. They sat on to the end of the session, when their proceedings were interrupted by the dissolution of Parliament. But they reported before the dissolution took place that they could find no remedy, and that they were quite unable to find anything that would cure the evil they admitted, and which they said had been satisfactorily proved, to exist. In the next session the Committee was re-appointed, and my hon. friend, who was at that time the Secretary of the Local Government Board, was appointed Chairman. That was also a strong Committee composed of men of great ability and great knowledge of this subject. They were not interrupted by any dissolution of Parliament, and they sat until they had concluded their investigation. They also admitted the existence of this monstrous evil, but they, in their turn, could suggest no permanent remedy. Now, we have this unsolved problem to-day before us. Although the facts of the case have been investigated, I do not think there is any return or any information accessible to Members of Parliament which will give the real truth of the state of things, because these people who are unemployed are of the labouring classes. There are some of those referred to by the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil, who are skilled artisans or good workmen, and who, from some depression in their trade, are suddenly thrown out of work. There are also people who are chronically out of work, and who are never in any regular and continuous work. They work two or three days in the week, but are not habitually employed for the rest of the week. But there are a great many people among the unemployed who do not work in the ordinary sense of the term. They earn a living by looking out for odd jobs, selling small articles in the streets, and so forth, but they do not intend to work and do not want to work. There are a large number of people who are spoken of as unemployable. Now the unemployable are a class for whom I feel the most profound compassion, because many of those unemployable have originally been extremely good workmen. There is nothing that deteriorates more rapidly than the capacity to do good work. It is a common law of nature. When any function is not exercised it very soon withers away, and when a man is accidentally thrown out of work, from that moment, as it were, the workman begins rapidly to deteriorate. If he is unfortunately, through no fault of his own, out of work for several months, at the end he is neither physically nor mentally capable of doing the kind of work he was formerly able to perform. There was an interesting attempt made some years ago to sample the unemployed. The inquiry was conducted by a Committee of Toynbee Hall in connection with local committees at various places all over the United Kingdom. There were not only centres in London, but in Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, and many other large towns. The plan was this—a street or typical block of houses, or, it might be, one or two streets or blocks of houses, were chosen, inhabited by the poorer kind of workers. A census was taken at the beginning of winter in all those houses, and the occupations of every householder were taken down. Out of the names so taken down a number of people alleged themselves to be out of work. Those people who alleged themselves to be out of work were observed during the whole winter. They did not know that they were being watched. The observation was done through School Board officers, rent collectors, sanitary officers, district visitors, and people of that kind. At the end of the winter the information obtained from all those various centres was collected by a very clever American gentleman. Although the inquiry was far too small to admit of any general conclusions being drawn as to proportions or percentages, or anything of that kind, yet it did throw a good deal of light on the condition of the so-called unemployed. The most remarkable conclusion at which the Committee arrived was this, that the unemployed are a permanent class. They are not people who go about from place to place. They are not people who change from occupation to occupation. They are not clever enough for that. The clever artisan who is thrown out of work would apply himself to some other trade; but those chronically unemployed people have not the energy to shift their habitation or their employment. That was confirmed by the inquiries of the Committee, who eight years ago reported on this subject. They addressed a great number of inquiries to local authorities all over the country, and the result was, that it appeared from the answers to these inquiries that the bulk of the people unemployed were not unemployed because of trade depression or changes of occupation, but because of seasonal reasons and work stopping in winter. I think we may almost conclude that the mass of the unemployed people is always existing. They are always present with us in ordinary times. They live at semi-starvation, and they and their families scarcely ever have enough to eat. They are habitually underfed. In particular seasons, of which the present winter appears to be one from economical and seasonal causes, their position becomes acute, and the public conscience is aroused. People say, "Oh! something must be done to help them in Parliament." Then a Royal Commission is appointed, but nothing really is done. I earnestly hope that the President of the Local Government Board will understand that it is not a Royal Commission that is wanted at all, for sufficient facts of the case are known. What is wanted is a remedy. Now, I am afraid, and I am sorry to say it, that there is no real remedy for this particular disease of the body politic. It is like some of the diseases of the human body — doctors cannot cure them; all they can do is to improve the general health. I am afraid that this is a social disease which cannot be cured in itself; it is really to be met by a general improvement of the social condition of the people in every direction. If all these children were healthily brought up; if all were properly educated — I do not mean merely in reading, writing, and arithmetic—but taught so as to have an intelligent development of their character, and were brought up as healthy men and women; and if you had the industries of the country properly organised, I think that this unemployed class might be starved out altogether. The disease would disappear with the class which furnished the great bulk of the unemployed, because cases of skilled workmen suddenly thrown out of employment could easily be dealt with by trades unions and the local authorities. The distress from which they suffer is generally very short, and they can be put into a different category, as they do not form the bulk of the unemployed at the present moment. How is that to be done; how is this improvement in the diseased body to be made? People, I think very rightly, will not give up the idea of doing something for these unhappy people — some unemployed and unemployable — who generally lead a most miserable and wretched life. It is rather remarkable that every hon. Member who has spoken in this debate has suggested remedies applicable by the local authorities. My right hon. friend, the Member for Birmingham, who gave a most interesting speech to the House, believes in small holdings, and in putting people on the land. I think every effort should be made to do this; and if the community which he described as existing in Worcestershire could be repeated in every county in England, not only would it reduce the number of unemployed, but the nation would be strengthened. If we could put a million of people on the land, this country would be richer and stronger. The right hon. Gentleman says that the county authorities have got ample powers now, and that they do not require legislation if they would only put the existing Acts in force. But the right hon. Members for Merthyr Tydvil and Battersea claimed that some additional powers should be given to the local authorities, and some obstructions removed which prevent them from trying experiments. A good many suggestions were made by hon. Members, some of which were of so Socialistic a character that they could not expect me to support them. But the hon. Member for Birmingham and the hon. Member who has just sat down have made some practical suggestions which, if local authorities were willing to try experiments in that direction, they should be allowed to do. Some of those experiments have already been tried in the larger boroughs, and there is no practical reason why they should not be established in all boroughs. The hiring of land, and the taking a farm, are not, I believe, beyond the powers of the local authorities at present. I think they have power to do so.

Mr JOHN BURNS: No.

Sir JOHN GORST: Well, if they want the power, they should have it. Because it is no use saying that these unemployed people cannot be reclaimed. I do not at all hold with those who say that the present unemployed are wastrels, and that you cannot do anything for them. But you can. It has been established and proved that you can do something for them by the operations of the Salvation Army. I do not know what is going on now down at Hadley, the Salvation Army farm in Essex; but, whatever you may think of the Salvation Army itself and its doctrines, if you go down to Hadley you may see some of the formerly most idle people from the slums of London now working extremely hard and well. How the Salvation Army does is a wonder, but they do succeed in making these people work extremely hard, and what the Salvation Army has done, other institutions might do, and all local authorities can do; or they might employ the Salvation Army or the Church Army to supervise the work. It is not a thing unknown, even in Governments, because the Government of the Australian Colonies has employed General Booth and the Salvation Army in many social works, and in what the Commonwealth of Australia have done we might follow. The House will observe that the work of the Salvation Army at Hadley has been put to an extremely practical test. The Countess of Warwick, having determined to carry out very large improvement operations in her garden at Easton, which involved a great deal of work, made a contract with the Salvation Army to do it. The Salvation Army brought down to Easton sixty of these so-called unemployables, with, of course, Salvation Army foremen; and the Countess of Warwick has stated publicly that the work done is admirable, and that her head gardener, who was perfectly aghast when he first heard of the contract being made, now admits that he never saw a job of the kind better or more speedily carried out. I must add that though these people were formerly of the worst and most undesirable character—two of them being, I believe, murderers—when they lived at Easton there was no crime, no drunkenness, and no disorder of any kind whatever. That is a very good test. I am not a Salvationist myself, but I confess I am perfectly capable of appreciating social work of this kind, and I would say to the local authorities and to the President of the Local Government Board, "Go thou and do likewise." I would not have a Royal Commission, but I think the President of the Local Government Board should take into consideration whether the powers now possessed by the local authorities are ample, and if they must or must not be extended. The Government are going to bring in a Bill to give additional powers to the local authorities with reference to the housing of the poor, and some provisions might be included in that Bill for dealing with the unemployed. It might lead to a very practical result if the local authorities were given sufficient powers in this matter. The hon. Member for Birmingham says that the County Councils have not dealt with their powers under the Small Holdings Act; but it is the people themselves who are to blame. Parliament has done its part, and it is the fault of the people themselves if the County Councils have not done their part. Hon. Members should stir up the electors to return to their County Councils men who will carry out the powers which Parliament has conferred on the people; and if the social condition of the people is not improved, I think it will be seen that that is the fault of the people themselves. Hon. Members should endeavour, in a missionary spirit, to go amongst the people and stir them up to do something for themselves, and make their representatives on the County Councils do what is absolutely necessary for their welfare.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs): This debate has extended over nearly the whole ground, and I would support the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Merthyr. The question of the unemployed is, of course, one of great difficulty, as we all know; and there is no doubt that great differences of opinion exist as to the causes which lead to the frequent unemployment of labour. In dealing with the social system under which we live, I do not think it is desirable to make very extensive changes all at once in the customs of the people; but in the meantime it is most desirable to do everything which can be done, and I believe a great deal can be done, for the purpose of providing work for the unemployed and of reclaiming those persons who are capable, or might be made capable, of doing work. The Amendment deals with two matters, one of which relates to the land. My right hon. friend the Member for the Bordesley Division referred to legislation which was passed creating small holdings. I think my right hon. friend will remember that it is now twenty years since he and I spent many days, I might almost say many weeks, together in drawing up the first Small Holdings Bill ever drafted under the ægis of the Colonial Secretary. My right hon. friend admits that the Bill was not carried in its entirety. It contained no compulsory powers, and it is necessary in many parts of the country, if you want land, to have compulsory powers. My right hon. friend knows as well as I do that the Arcadia in Worcestershire which he described would be impossible in many parts of the country, because the owners would not be prepared to part with their land. When we introduced the Bill it contained compulsory powers, and I, for my part, have not changed my mind in the matter, although I do not presume to reproach my right hon. friend for having changed his. We are, after all, dealing in this Amendment with the unemployed, who are nearly all in the great cities, and it is to the authorities of the great cities we must look to provide a remedy by taking the people to the land; yet it is these very urban districts which do not possess the compulsory powers which have been given to the County Councils.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: They do not possess the land.

SIR ROBERT REID: I want to refer to all the arguments put forward by my right hon. friend in order to support the doctrine that we ought to give to the Urban Councils, as well as the County Councils, the power of getting land.

There is another small defect in the Act, if I may speak of defects at all in my right hon. friend's presence, and it is that the machinery is rather cumbrous. It was necessary to adapt the measure to the prejudices of the House of Commons when the Act was passed. People were apprehensive, as they always are when any reform is brought forward for the first time; the Bill was looked upon with derision, and in 1885 it was described by the Tory Party as a measure to provide "three acres and a cow." The Bill was drawn in a tentative spirit. It has many good qualities, and it has also some defects, the chief of the latter being that the machinery is somewhat too cumbrous.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: It is not cumbrous at all.

SIR ROBERT REID: My right hon. friend has no doubt a certain amount of parental affection for the Bill; but in my opinion it has some little defects, and it is with these that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil proposes to deal. A measure ought to be introduced empowering the local authority to acquire land for cultivation. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University used a most potent argument in support of that proposal. He referred to the Salvation Army having executed works to the satisfaction of fastidious owners. Why should not the Urban Councils deal with the case of the unemployed as well as the Salvation Army or any other agency interested in the work of reclamation? I have said enough in respect of the question of the land. In the latter part of the Amendment it is proposed that the local authorities should be authorised to set up undertakings on which men unable to find employment in the ordinary labour market might be set to work. If that were to be interpreted as imposing an obligation on Town Councils to find employment for all who are unemployed. I could not support it.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: I purposely framed my Amendment to enable local authorities to act without compelling them to act.

SIR ROBERT REID: I am glad to hear what the hon. Gentleman says, because it bears out the interpretation I put upon the words. The proposal is permissive; it allows the local authorities to make experiments and to provide employment according to the necessities of the case. I cannot see anything in the least injurious in that. An hon. Gentleman referred to the well-known Board of Trade circular of 1892, which required, or rather recommended, local authorities to find employment when it was absolutely necessary, and this Amendment does nothing more than slightly extend the recommendations of that circular. The fact is we have the workhouse and we have the prison; but there is no machinery I know of, available to local authorities to assist in cases of necessity, which does not partake of the nature of degradation, and they have no means of trying experiments either in work or reclamation. No one knows what the ultimate solution of this problem may be. I do not pretend to tell where wiser men than I have failed; but I do not see the smallest objection to allowing the local authority a far freer hand than they have. I believe they would exercise their powers with judgment; they would certainly exercise them in a guarded manner; and although I sympathise heartily with the aspirations of my right hon. friend that a more full remedy might be provided by getting the people back to the land, it is because we must not accept that as an absolute panacea for all the evils of the situation that I most heartily concur in the Amendment.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): I confess I listened to the speech of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, and to his conclusions, in some surprise, since he told the House that he had no hesitation in supporting the Amendment because he believes in the first part, giving local authorities some new powers in regard to the acquisition of land, and regards the second part as carrying the local authorities not much further than the circular of 1892. I would point out to the House that either the Amendment would carry them much further or that it would be useless. The local authorities have powers to carry out local works of various kinds, and I certainly object, as I shall show the House, not only to the first part but to the second part. I object to the first part because in the form advocated by the hon. Member it would be much more likely to increase destitution than to decrease it; and I object to the second part because everything necessary in that direction can be done at present by the local authorities, if they think it desirable, and if distress is sufficiently acute.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: Might I ask whether the expression, local authority includes Rural as well as Urban and Town Councils?

MR. WALTER LONG: Certainly. I am talking now of the second part of the Amendment, which runs as follows: "to set up undertakings, whereby men and women, unable to find employment in the ordinary labour market, might be profitably set to work." What setting up undertakings precisely means I don't know, and the phrase has not been elaborated by the hon. Gentleman, but if he means undertaking local works of any kind necessary in any locality, then comes again the question of the local authorities. They have the power at present if it is that kind of undertaking which is included in the circular of the Local Government Board to which reference has been made. Whatever my hon. friend has done, nobody who has heard his speech can deny that it was one of the most interesting features of an interesting debates because, after all, there are many of us who have been long enough in politic, and Parliament to remember when this scheme of land reform found but few friends, and was not popular on either side of the House, as it is sometimes believed to be now. My hon. friend, by working the country and working Parliament; by incessant labour amongst the agricultural community of the country, did his best to secure this reform. I believe that to no one man here is this reform so much due as to my hon. friend, and apart altogether from his views, hearty and sincere as they are, he has made a most interesting contribution to a most interesting debate, while some of these reforms which he has advocated he has seen placed upon the Statute-book.

I agree with a good deal that has been said by my hon. friend. I have not much objection to the extension of small holdings if you adopt certain precautions, but I altogether decline to accept the description which the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil gave of British agriculture. I confess it always surprises me when I hear hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House maintain that British agriculture has failed, and that the British farmer is a failure as compared with the farmer of other countries.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: No, no!

MR. WALTER LONG: It is all very well to say "no," but I took down the hon. Gentleman's words.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: My point was that a greater number of people were employed on the land in Continental countries than were employed in this country. I had no desire to cast any reflection on the skill or ability of the British farmers.

MR. WALTER LONG: The hon. Member said the land of this country could be made as prosperous as the land of other countries if a new system was adopted. It is more prosperous now. The hon. Member went on to say that it did not pay the farmer to increase the fertility of the soil, because the profit went into the pockets of the landlord. Therefore, his contention was that the land-tenure of this country has made the land less productive than the land of other countries. I maintain that that proposition is a false one. If any one who holds that view will take the figures as to the production of this country as compared with that of others, they will find that we produce more and carry a greater amount of stock, except horned cattle, than any other country. If you take all the other figures you will find that the system which the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil has maligned has made the land of this country the most productive in the world. Therefore it is not just to attack the land, and say we have not done as well with the land of this country as other countries with a different system have done. What is the state of this question? The hon. Member has given some figures. His estimate, in my judgment, according to the best means I have of testing it, is largely exaggerated. The speech we have listened to to-day here has been more limited in its character and more moderate in its tone than many other speeches that have been made outside. We have heard there is a much wider spread of destitution than has been alluded to in this debate. But what I want to impress upon the House is that although there are signs in the Metropolis and in the large cities of an increase in destitution, in the returns with regard to pauperism, and also that there are a large number of people out of situations, neither in the Metropolis nor the country is the case so serious as to justify any Government in adopting those extreme and drastic measures that have found favour in certain portions of the House. These can only be justified in times of national disaster, as in the time of the Lancashire cotton famine. At the present time, although the lack of employment is serious, I hope and believe it will diminish, because happily for us the climatic conditions are more favourable than hitherto, and we have not those conditions of weather which are so prejudicial to many of the workers. I have been at some pains to ascertain, as far as possible, the number of the unemployed in the Metropolis, and I am given to understand that 400,000 is an exaggerated estimate. I have examined those figures by the tests open to us at the Board of Trade, and if the House examines them by those tests it will find they are exaggerated. But take any one of the local cases mentioned and apply to that case the test of local knowledge, and you are led to the conclusion that there has been considerable exaggeration. One hon. Gentleman said that in Manchester there was a large number of people who were unable to obtain shelter, and who were sleeping in a place called the brick-kilns, and elsewhere in the open-air, and that there was every evidence of great pressure in the city of Manchester. My hon. friend behind me, the Member for South-West Manchester, who lives in that city, has been closely following this question, and has been to the brick-kilns, the lodging-houses, and the shelters in Manchester, and has been able to see for himself the condition of things there. My hon. friend assures me that he went round those places and found, he believed, that there was plenty of room in all the lodging-houses and shelters. There was only one lodging-house which was crowded, and the reason for that was that it was one established by the Wesleyan Church of a special character, and attracted people to it by its surroundings. My hon, friend stated that in one place he found provision of about a thousand beds, and that the average occupation of those beds fell far below that number. If that is so, it is not fair to suggest that people are sleeping in the open because they cannot get shelter.

Mr KEIR HARDIE: They can't pay for it.

Mr WALTER LONG: The hon. Member suggests that they will not go to the casual wards, and cannot afford to pay for the shelters, but even then there is the question which has been raised as to the brick-kilns. My hon. friend the Member for South-West Manchester has visited the brick-kilns and has seen the condition of things there, and he gives me his evidence that the number sleeping out in the brick-kilns has been largely exaggerated. I only mention that to show that there can be no doubt that there will always be, on questions of this kind, great exaggeration. I do not say this in order to undervalue the gravity of the case made by the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil, but because I think it is right that all these statements made with regard to the numbers of destitute, and so forth, should be very carefully tested before they are accepted as showing the real facts of the case. Most of the cases are exaggerated, I admit, but what are the exceptions? Everybody knows there are unemployed in different parts of the country, and, as a rule, it is not difficult to find, where the numbers are serious, what the reason has been for the great falling off in employment. In West Ham, where the unemployed are more numerous than in any other part of the country, the reason is that there has been a great falling off of employment at the docks, and if you take some of the towns in the north you will find the reason is that these men are mostly employed in the shipbuilding industry, and there has been a great falling off in shipbuilding. But because there has been a temporary want of employment at the docks and in the shipbuilding industry, are you to turn these men into landholders and farmers in the country, and put them on the land in the hope that you will make them contented labourers? Because if that is the only remedy you have, I am convinced it will fail you and fall very short of your real requirements. There are some other suggestions made. There have been suggestions made that there should be an increase in the labour bureaux, and better means of communication between different districts as to the condition of the unemployed in the labour market. I think there is something to be said for labour bureaux of that sort, and when the suggestion was made some years ago I was attracted by it, but the experience of these bureaux in this country does not show that they are largely taken advantage of by the labouring classes, so I do not know that the extension of that system is one that can be profitably recommended for the solution of the unemployed problem. Another suggestion is that we should go in for large works of afforestation. When I was at the Board of Agriculture this question was being constantly brought before me by agriculturists and others from Scotland, where a great deal more work has been done, and better done, in connection with afforestation than in almost any other part of the world. The work there has been of an admirable character, but when you come to regard it as a profitable enterprise what are the facts of the case? Those who are engaged in the work tell me that some years must elapse before you can hope for the smallest profit. ["The profits accumulate."] But where is the money to come from to run this system of afforestation during the fourteen or more years during which it would be unremunerative?

MR. KEIR HARDIE: From the same source as the money for the Uganda Railway.

MR. WALTER LONG: But the hon. Gentleman is one of the many critics who are constantly finding fault with us for spending too much public money.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: Abroad.

MR. WALTER LONG: Not only abroad. Unless it is on a particular object suggested by the hon. Gentleman the expenditure of public money is, in his view, bad. Does the hon. Gentleman, from his knowledge of the men with whom he is acquainted, really believe that to start a system of afforestation would deal with even the smallest fraction of the unemployed question? How many of the unemployed would accept the offer of such work? It is almost trifling with the question to suggest that by methods of land cultivation or afforestation, you can deal with a problem so difficult and deep-seated as this. No doubt there is some land in the country which might very well be used for planting timber, but this work is of a peculiarly difficult and laborious kind, and if you put to it a large number of the present unemployed they would soon say it was not to their liking. Many of those who recently paraded the streets of London have been offered work and declined it. They have said, "That is not what we want, we want money to be distributed amongst those who are in want of it." These men, in many cases, are acquainted with a particular class of labour, such as in the docks or shipyards. Are you going to take them from work which they understand and put them to work of which they know nothing? And would you ask them to devote the rest of their lives to it, or are they to be so employed only spasmodically in times of depression? The suggestion is altogether too general and crude for serious consideration.

Then my right hon. friend the Member for Cambridge dealt with the work of the Salvation Army. I have had an opportunity of seeing the work of the Salvation Army. I have visited Hadley Farm and seen the work the men are doing. No doubt forty or fifty men might easily be found who could dig a garden as well as the average agricultural labourer, but I am not at all prepared to accept my right hon. friend's suggestion that Boards of Guardians or Municipal Authorities, still less the Local Government Board, should employ the Salvation Army as an agency for dealing with the unemployed, or that we should follow their example and ourselves set men to work. Such a plan would, after all, deal with only a very small number of those in difficulty; it would not in any way remove the difficulty or get to the root of the problem and prevent its recurrence.

Another suggestion is that the circular previously issued by the Local Government Board should be re-issued. During the recess I was constantly in London, and in communication with my inspectors all over the country. With one exception those inspectors have been strongly opposed to the issue of that circular at present, their reason being that the local authorities are fully alive to the state of affairs, and have in every case, where the difficulty is considerable, taken action either through committees of their own or in conjunction with charitable bodies All the evidence points to the undesirability of issuing a circular which ought only to be issued when the circumstances are so grave as to make some special steps necessary. It is not sufficient to say that there are a certain number of unemployed in the country generally. Before we ask local authorities to go outside their ordinary domain and find work which is not really necessary for the locality, we ought to be quite certain that they are either ignorant of the condition of things or are apathetic in their treatment of it. There is no evidence whatever in that direction. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University asked whether, in the opinion of the Government, the powers possessed by local authorities are sufficient, and whether, if they are not sufficient, we are prepared to increase them. I am not aware of any new power required by local authorities to enable them to carry out local works. Boards of Guardians have full power in regard to relief, and local urban and rural sanitary authorities can do the work they are empowered to do at a special time if they think it desirable.

I do not think there is any sovereign remedy for this difficulty of the unemployed. Many of the subjects discussed yesterday and today touched this question—the provision of better houses, sanitary surroundings, and so forth—but I ask hon. Members not to believe that any large scheme of making local authorities cultivators of land, or of calling upon them to employ men on large tracts of land, would do any real good. Small holdings are excellent things in their way, but everybody knows that unless the land is carefully selected and special regard paid to the conditions under which it is held, you might as well throw your money into the sea. The same remark applies to the allotments system. A little may be done in different ways, but that anything can be done by a big scheme is quite contrary to the fact.

We must all sympathise with those who are temporarily out of work — especially with those who want work and cannot get it. I have been sorry to hear references of a depreciatory character to charitable agencies. Many of those who suffer most will never be dealt with except by means of charitable associations; they would starve in a garret rather than ask for help outside, and still less appeal to the Poor Law. It is only through these charitable associations, and by means of the noble men and women who devote their lives to this work, that you can reach some of the most deserving people at a time like the present. I should, therefore, be sorry for anything to be said, even inadvertently, which would lead people to believe that the work of charity in connection with the unemployed is not noble work, or that it carries any form of degradation to those who are assisted thereby, especially when their necessity arises from no fault of their own. If the labours of charitable agencies were lessened, I am convinced that in times like the present the suffering would be far greater and more real even than now. There was a suggestion made by the hon. Member for Battersea which I was rather surprised to hear. He suggested that the Militia should be called out at a later period of the year.

MR. JOHN BURNS said what he suggested was that the Militia should not be called out at those portions ot the spring and summer when work was most plentiful.

MR. WALTER LONG: I do not think I was misrepresenting the hon. Member when I say that he suggested that they should be called out in the autumn and winter. This, however, is a War Office question. I regret that he suggested that the selection of the time of the year was due to want of energy on the part of the officers, whereas it is due to the belief that it is only at those times of the year that it is possible to give them the training that is essential for them to get under canvas. I do not think his reason is well founded. I can only assure the House that as far as the Local Government Board is concerned we have watched, and shall continue to watch, the conditions of labour very closely. I do not think there is an evil effect in connection with this question of the unemployed that escapes our attention, but I deprecate the adoption by this House of remedies which at first sight may seem practical, but which will not bear the test of examination, and which, if applied, would increase, and not decrease, the number of unemployed in the country.

*MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green) said that this question of the unemployed also affected the Sister Isle to a great extent. He had listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and he was surprised at the want of sympathy he had shown for the Amendment of his hon. friend. He had stated that the hon. Member who moved this Motion had not suggested any remedy to meet the difficulty. The hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil in his Amendment suggests a remedy. He (the hon. Member for Merthyr) had drawn attention to the efforts which were now being made by trades organisations to assist those of their members who were out of work, but the drain upon their resources was terrible, and some of the members of those organisations were paying double and treble levies in consequence of lack of employment. He thought some step should be taken by the Government to strengthen the hands of corporations, so that at times like this they would be able to do something to deal with this terrible problem. He instanced the case of Dublin, when an appeal was made recently to the Council by the unemployed for work, and pointed out that owing to such restrictions as were imposed on municipal authorities only a temporary form of relief could be given. With reference to afforestation and the reclamation of waste land, he suggested to the Chief Secretary for Ireland that in the Bill he was about to introduce he would insert some provision for the reclamation of waste land and the planting of timber in Ireland. They in Ireland could not take advantage of the Small Holdings Act, with the result that the people from the country came into the towns and swamped the labour market. The labour organisations would not be able to meet the needs of the increasing number of unemployed much longer, because their funds would not last for ever, and as soon as their money was exhausted then the responsibility of the State would be very serious It was the duty of the Government to give a sympathetic hearing to this Amendment, and he appealed to the House to vote for it and give some encouragement to the thousands of people who in processions were marching through the streets begging for bread.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said this had been a most interesting debate, and thanks were due to the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil for bringing this question forward. He was greatly surprised that the Speech from the Throne made no reference to this question. What was the existing state of affairs? They had heard the numbers of the unemployed. It had been estimated that between 5 and 6 per cent. of the total members of trades unions were unemployed, but not sufficient account had been taken of the enormous number of unskilled labourers who were not members of trades unions. The number of unemployed could not be accurately estimated, because the number of unskilled labourers who had no organisation could not be calculated at any given time. Nor were the returns of the trades unions a real test of the definite state of employment in the country, because the members of trades unions were the best skilled artisans, and they were the very last people who were dispensed with by employers, since they would be difficult to replace, and when business was slack they were often retained, if only employed on half or quarter time. The President of the Board of Trade in his speech said very truly that various remedies had been proposed for the existing state of affairs, and he referred to one of the remedies put forward by the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil. He asked would it not be much better, instead of looking to remedies, to ascertain the causes which produce this want of employment.

There was no other country but this that suffered from this state of affairs. There was no real want of employment in the United States and Germany, and in those countries the unemployed problem was much less acute. In no other country were the Government face to face with this problem of the unemployed, and was there any other capital in the world which had been the witness of such processions of unemployed as those which had been seen in London. There might be some persons in those processions who were unemployable and undeserving, but it could not be doubted that there were a considerable number who, if they could obtain employment, would welcome the opportunity. But beyond all these men there were a very large number who would rather starve in a garret than accept Poor Law relief or charitable assistance, and still less would they take part in processions of the unemployed. Therefore it was the duty of the Government not only to find remedies but to examine into the causes. These questions were perfectly well known, and until the representatives of the people determined to go into the causes they would always have this problem of the unemployed with them. It was absurd and ridiculous for them to impose new burdens on the taxpayer so as to find work for the unemployed, or to attempt to distribute relief amongst them, so long as they admitted 70,000 or 80,000 aliens into the East End of London with the result that their own people were driven out of employment in much greater numbers. These aliens were coming to this country in greater numbers every day, without the slightest restriction or inquiry. Under these circumstances what encouragement was there to put capital into businesses in order to employ labour under the existing system?

The President of the Local Government Board stated that shipbuilding was very much depressed, and no wonder that this was so when they saw the disabilities under which shipping was labouring at the present time. What encouragement was there to people to build ships when they saw how many shipping companies were paying no dividend at all? What encouragement was there to put capital into manufactories in this country when their capital was not protected in the slightest degree, and when the whole of their output was met with favoured foreign competition without the slightest tax upon foreign goods. They were greatly indebted to the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil for introducing this subject. It was far better to look at the causes of the want of employment, than to beat about the bush in regard to wild schemes of relief. Let them attack the disease at its fountain head, and prevent this question of the unemployed being always with us. It was not with the people of the United States, France, or Germany. If we alone in the world maintained a particular fiscal system, and if we alone were face to face with this perpetual problem of the unemployed, surely there was ground for believing that there was something wrong with the industrial and fiscal system which brought about such a state of affairs.

*MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said that, in his opinion, alien immigration had no effect whatever on the skilled trades of this country; and, admittedly, these trades were suffering very considerably from the want of employment at this moment. He thought the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil, who moved the Amendment, was to be congratulated on the very important admissions which had been drawn from hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. He agreed that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find a sovereign remedy for the unemployed, but he was surprised to hear that confession from the other side of the House, because it seemed to him to be in direct conflict with the opinions held by their late chief, Lord Salisbury, in 1895. This question of the unemployed was one of the trump cards they played in their electioneering game in 1895. Lord Salisbury went to Bradford to prepare the way for the coming election of the year. In the speech he delivered, he seemed to indicate that there was, in his opinion, a sovereign remedy for dealing with this question of the unemployed. What was the remedy? It was a Government in whom the people had confidence. Looking to the majorities by which it was supported in both Houses of Parliament, surely they must come to the conclusion that, at all events, the present Government had the confidence of the country behind it. Yet here they were with a Conservative Government in office discussing this serious and solemn question of the unemployed.

He agreed also that the number of the unemployed might be somewhat, and probably was, exaggerated. His own impression was that the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil had under-estimated the number when he said that the minimum would be something like 400,000, because the Secretary of the National Committee on the Unemployed, who had been in constant receipt of reports from all parts of the United Kingdom, had stated that, in his opinion, the number could not be less than 900,000. But it seemed to him that the very fact that they had difficulty in ascertaining what was the state of the situation was a reason why the Government ought to have acted upon the recommendation of the Select Committee which considered this question. That committee recommended that greater care and attention should be paid in the way of better organisation in order to get at the facts as to the number of unemployed, yet nothing had been done to provide a remedy. Only last year the Government passed a Bill which provided for creating labour bureaux in London, and he was misinformed if there had been any active attempt to put the measure into operation. He confessed that the local authorities were responsible to a large extent for more not being done, and he sincerely hoped that one result of this discussion would be to compel local authorities to exercise the powers they possessed for dealing with the question of the want of employment. He suggested that the Government should if necessary introduce legislation for the creation of labour bureaux throughout the country, so that they might be better able to know the state of the labour market. He thought one of the difficulties that had stood in the way of their acquiring land was that they had no compulsory powers. There were Lord De Freynes in England as well as Ireland, landlords who would neither let nor sell their land to local authorities, and there was no power to compel them. Until the local authorities were invested with powers to acquire land compulsorily in order to enable them to deal with questions affecting the social comfort of the people, they could not expect that these authorities would show very much greater activity than they were doing at the present moment.

He was surprised to hear the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division state that the present Acts contained all that was necessary. They did nothing of the kind in his opinion. The Allotments Act and the Small Holdings Act were practically dead letters at this moment, simply because they had to deal with the question on voluntary lines. In his judgment they would never have a satisfactory solution of this question until they got rid of the voluntary principle, and enacted that where land was necessary for the social amelioration of the people local authorities, where landlords were reluctant to part with their land voluntarily on reasonable terms, should have power to acquire it compulsorily. He sincerely hoped that this debate would dispel the idea that the way to get rid of want of employment was to have a Conservative Government in office.

MR. MUNRO-FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said that hon. Members who for so many years had supported the principle of the compulsory acquisition of land, where the public interest demanded it, could hardly refrain from taking part in this discussion. It was perfectly arguable that any land taken for afforestation or small holdings would not give any immediate relief to those unemployed at the present time. With that he concurred. Any system of afforestation started upon a larger scale could not be expected to bring immediate relief to any person now unemployed. Moreover, when they were dealing with allotments, small holdings, or afforestation they must have men who had been thoroughly trained for work, and educated for it, or they could do nothing good. But, looking further ahead, there were many cases besides those with which the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries Burghs dealt so well, and which had been brought to his mind in connection with the drafting of the Small Holdings Bill. On the Local Government

Bill for Scotland they had supported compulsory powers, and the Congested Districts Board for the Highlands had been given a certain mode of compulsion, as had been shown by their report issued the other day. Although it was true, as the President of the Local Government Board had said, that a larger amount of produce was grown upon much of the land in this country than on the land of any other country in the world, yet it was also the case that there was a larger proportion of waste land in this country which might be utilised than in any other country in Western Europe. Again, production here was limited to certain forms of agricultural produce. In the East of Scotland, where the mining industry was developed, the farmers, who were the best in the world, had been affected by farmers from the West of Scotland because they could not produce the milk which was required in the district. There were certain classes of agricultural crops which could only be produced by minute care bestowed on the land on small holdings, and there was no form of occupation on land which could maintain so large a population as the small holding system. So far, therefore, he was favourable to it, but unless the mantle of Mr. Horace Plunkett's co-operative scheme could fall upon them he was afraid that not so much progress could be made in this country as they desired. If the genius of Ireland which had been shown in this capacity for co-operation could awaken any responsive spark in this country, where the agriculturists, large or small, were notoriously incapable of co-operation, there was, he believed, a great future for small holdings. What he wanted to point out was that if there were compulsory powers for afforestation on any large scale—and that could only be conducted by the State, and where the foresters were properly trained—then they might have scores of thousands of men engaged in that labour who would gain a good livelihood. In that way, and by the extension of small holdings, they might add greatly to the stability of the social system of this country. That was what was wanted, although it was looking a long way ahead. He maintained that there was need for compulsory powers for the acquisition of land being held both by the local authorities and by the State if they were to lay the foundation of the increased prosperity of the rural population, and promote that stability in the social condition of the people, which would be a stand-by when periods of depression came upon them. The end of the war and the severe winter might have tended to a great deal of the hardship experienced at the present moment, but he was satisfied that unless they had compulsory powers, and trained people to take advantage of the opportunities offered to them, they should have in the future more serious crises than that which they were going through at present.

MR. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich) said he could not see that Protection would do away with the unemployed, and he was certain that the unemployed would be in a far worse position if their food and clothing were dearer than they were now, which would be the case under Protection. The hon. Member who had introduced the Amendment had declared that the tide of labour was continually flowing from the country to the town. This question of the unemployed was, in his opinion, absolutely bound up with that fact. In the last decade the people employed in the agricultural districts had decreased by 127 for every 10,000, and he thought this question should seriously occupy the House. When the Agricultural Rating Bill was being passed through Parliament it was urged in its favour that it would preserve the bone and sinew of the country on the land, but he did not think it had had that effect. He had one suggestion to make as to compulsory purchase. At present people who bought land did so in small quantities, and had, therefore, to pay high prices for it. He did not see how the local authorities could buy land for allotment purposes without putting a burden upon the rates, and he did not believe the people of this country would favour any scheme which would increase the local rates. In 1896 an enormous number of large estates were in the market, and he had then made a suggestion that all these estates should be scheduled, and instead of giving two millions a year for the relief of local rates, the Government should spend the two millions in buying some of these estates, cut them up into small holdings of one to twenty acres, to be let at a low purchasing rentals. The Government would not lose any money by such a transaction, and would send many people back to the land. He believed the prosperity of the country was intimately connected with this question, and he hoped the Government would do something to solve this very intricate and difficult problem.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 161; Noes, 201. (Division List No. 3.)

AYES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Abraham, William (*Rhondda*)
Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*)
Ambrose, Robert
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland-
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*)
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Ellis, John Edward
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Saml. T. (*Glamorgan*)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Rt. Hn. Sir E. (*Berwick*
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (*Bristl, E*
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope John Deans (*Fife, West*
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, David B. (*Swansea*)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Lambert, George
Law, H. Alex. (*Donegal, W.*)
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (*Sligo, North*)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*)
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Col, John P. (*Galway, N.*)
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, South*)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (*Cork*)
O'Brien, Kendal (*Tipp'rary Mid*
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Brien, William (*Cork*)
O'Connor, T. P. (*Liverpool*)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (*Mayo, N.*)
O'Kelly, James (*Roscommon, N*
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, Sir Charles M (*Durham*
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pickard, Benjamin
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (*Waterford*)
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hon C R (*Northants*
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glamorgan, E.*)
Thomas, David Alf. (*Merthyr*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W.R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Tully, Jasper
Walton, John L. (*Leeds, S.*)
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (*Norfolk*)
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whiteley, George (*York, W.R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Williams, Osmond (*Merioneth*)
Woodhouse, Sir J T (*Huddersfld*
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Keir Hardy and Mr. John Burns.

NOES.

Aird, Sir John
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander

Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beckett, Ernest William
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, T. G. (*Lynn Regis*)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Bullard, Sir Harry
Campbell, Rt Hn J A (*Glasg.*)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain,Rt.Hn.J A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig, Charles C. (*Antrim S.*)
Cranborne, Lord
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Davenport, William Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs,HnA.G.H(*City of Lond*
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (*St. Albans*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon,Hn.J.E.(*Elgin & Nrn*
Gore,HnG.R.C.Ormsby-(*Salop*
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld.G.(*Midx*
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robt. Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent,Ashfd*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir Alexander
Hobhouse, RtHnH (*Somrst E*
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (*Sheff., B'tside*)
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (*Yorks, N.R.*)
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.(*Salop*
Keswick, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawson, John Grant
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
M'Killop,James(*Stirlingshire*)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Maxwell,WJH.(*Dumfriesshire*
Middlemore,JohnThrogmorton
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, William
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Montagu,Hon.J.Scott(*Hants.*)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray,RtHn.A.Graham(*Bute*
Nicholson, William Graham
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ritchie,Rt.Hn.Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, W. W.(*Liverpool*)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Saunderson, Rt.Hon.Col.Ed.J.
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, H. C. *N'thnm. Tynes'e*
Smith, Jas. Parker (*Lanarks*)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (*W.Bromwich*)
Stanley, Edward J. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphrey Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G. *Ox'd Univ.*
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent Col.Sir C.E H.*Sheffi'd*
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hon.Sir Wm.H.
Welby,Lt-Col.A.C.E.*Taunton*
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (*Notts*)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, Wm.H.(*Yorks.*)
Wodehouse,Rt.Hn E.R.(*Bath*)
Wortley, Rt.Hon. C.B.Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Main Question again proposed.

THE LONDON AND GLOBE FINANCE CORPORATION.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): In bringing this Motion before the House I wish to say, in the first instance, that I have no interest whatever in any of the companies which will be the subject of this discussion. I am not, and never have been, a shareholder in any of them, and

I take the matter up absolutely as a public question, because I think if it is not fully investigated that public confidence in joint-stock enterprise must be at an end. If such things as I will disclose to the House can be done, then an immediate alteration of the law ought to be called for. It has been stated that the reason why a public prosecution has not taken place is that certain exalted personages have been mixed up in these matters. I do not believe a word of that, and I am sure that the Attorney General would not allow himself to be influenced by any such circumstances. I regret to have to bring this matter before the attention of the House, as the House is not quite the place to try it, because one feels there is no defence; but I am obliged to do it because the question whether the persons connected with these companies should be prosecuted or not rests with the Attorney General, and he has refused to act. On the 16th August the Public Prosecutor wrote to a correspondent stating that he was acting under the directions of the Attorney General. Therefore, as a public prosecution must be set in motion by the Attorney General, it is only here that we are able to put the facts before him. I do not intend to indulge in any rhetoric, but I will simply state the facts as taken from the Report of the Official Receiver and Liquidator, Mr. Barnes. There are three companies mixed up in this matter — the London and Globe Financial Corporation, the British American Corporation, and the Standard Exploration Company, involving a capital of £5,000,000. The London and Globe was registered on the 1st March, 1897, with a capital of £2,000,000. It had an aristocratic directorate, including two lords, one baronet, and another gentleman, Mr. Whitaker Wright, who controlled the whole concern. Mr. Whitaker Wright had 67,650 shares originally, and disposed of 65,150, and he had only 2,500 when the company was wound up. The first balance sheet was produced on the 9th September, 1898. It showed an estimated profit of £989,000, a realised profit £182,000, and a paper profit £807,000. A dividend of 15 per cent. was paid, and £500,000 was put to the reserve. The second balance sheet was produced on the 30th September, 1899, and showed a profit of £275,000; a dividend of 10 per cent. was declared, and the reserve fund of £500,000 was kept intact. In that report the directors state:—

> "The directors propose to limit future dividends to 10 per cent. per annum, and by this means the directors believe the shares will be taken out of the speculative category, and soon be classed as an investment security from which the proprietors can count on receiving a specific return with unfailing regularity."

This was fifteen months from the previous balance sheet. It purported to show a profit on the previous year's transactions of £463,672. Yet the report stated that great financial depression had existed during the year, and that market values had heavily declined, and that in the case of this company a very large sum had been written off for depreciation, but, thanks to the new business transacted during the period, the balance to the credit of the profit and loss account might be considered satisfactory. This is the point to which I wish to direct the attention of the House. I take the figures as given, precisely, by the Official Receiver, without any ornamentation on my own part. This balance sheet was produced on the 5th December, 1900. Early in October Mr. Worters, then the principal accountant of the London and Globe Finance Corporation, prepared a draft balance sheet to the 30th of September which showed heavy losses. This Mr. Worters handed to Mr. Whitaker Wright, who immediately changed the accountant, and replaced Mr. Worters by Mr. Malcolm. And then Mr. Barnes goes on to say: "Between the 1st October and the 5th December, 1900, numerous transactions took place between the London and Globe and its allied companies, the effect of which was to improve the position of the London and Globe by over £1,000,000 sterling." Mr. Whitaker Wright, as managing director of the London and Globe Corporation, sold large blocks of shares to allied companies, of which he was also a director, to the extent of £1,000,000. One of these transactions, which I take from the Official Receiver's report, is worthy of notice. On the 29th of November, two months after this company was shown by its accountant to have sustained a heavy loss on its year's transactions, there was a board meeting held of the Standard Exploration Company, when Mr. Whitaker Wright, and one other director only, bought 105,102 shares from the London and Globe

Corporation. The amount of this transaction was £1,392,600. Surely this was an enormous transaction for a company to enter into when only two directors were present, and the managing director of the company which bought the shares was the managing director of the company which sold them. This only took place about six days before the balance sheet was prepared. The total transfers from the London and Globe to the Standard Exploration Company amounted to no less than £1,603,000. That is to say, between the times when the London and Globe Company found its accounts showed a loss and the time when the balance sheet was drawn up these transactions were entered into solely for the purpose of preparing the balance sheet finally issued to the shareholders. Although these transfers to the extent of £1,603,000 took place, none of the brokers gave their consent to them, nor were they consulted in any way about them. They were carried out, says Mr. Barnes, by the new accountant on the 5th of December 1900—the very day this balance sheet was issued. On the 29th of December, the whole of the entries relating to these transfers were written back and the liability of the brokers retransferred to the London and Globe Corporation. This, the House will agree, is certainly a matter that should be enquired into. Let me take another point. Just after the balance sheet of 1899 the London and Globe Corporation practically surrendered £250,000 worth of shares to the British and American Corporation. That was just after the London and Globe Corporation had prepared its balance sheet and circulated its accounts. Just before the issue of its next balance sheet its solicitors discovered that this transaction was *ultra vires*, so they again credited their own company with this £250,000, which happened to operate very favourably so far as the London and Globe Corporation was concerned, because they had given away the money just after the issue of one balance sheet and had taken credit for it just before the issue of the next. Another point to which Mr. Barnes drew attention was that there was an omission of London and Globe liabilities to the amount of £119,769, which was explained as having been due to an oversight, no entry having been made in the books of the London and Globe Corporation. The shares stood in the balance sheet of the company as of the value of £2,332,682 0s. 1d. It was rather curious that the penny is brought in, because the value of these shares was enormously inflated. Of that Mr. Barnes gives us an instance. He says 410,238 Standard Exploration Company shares were valued at £415,362, or at 20s. 3d. a piece, whereas they were only worth in the market from 9s. 6d. to 10s. 6d. That is another matter which, I suggest, requires a great deal of elucidation. I come to another point—the Victoria Gold Estates Company. This was a London and Globe Corporation promotion. The London and Globe Corporation gave the chairman of the company £500 in shares to become the chairman; that gentleman occupies one of the most respected positions, and bears one of the most honoured names in the country. By some financial jugglery they sold part of the property to two companies promoted by the London and Globe, and on the 3rd of December, 1900, two days before they published their balance sheet, they asked the Victoria Estates Company for an advance of £75,000 in cash, and I here observe that the 200,000 shares in the company held by the London and Globe, and the 80,000 held by Mr. Whitaker Wright, are treated on the same basis. That was a fraud on the London and Globe Corporation, and Mr. Barnes says by these operations the London and Globe converted an asset of £200,000 into one of £764,000, and increased its profit by £564,000. That was done for the purposes of the balance sheet. Now I think we come to something more astonishing, because I find, in order to show a respectable balance at its bankers, in the balance sheet, the London and Globe not only obtained this advance of £75,000, from the Victoria Estates Company but on the 5th of December, the day when the balance sheet was issued, it obtained a loan of £25,000 for two days from a firm of stockbrokers, for which the company paid £500. I ask the House whether this is not a case for enquiry. In that very year the company was purported to have made a profit of £463,672, and it had brought forward £295,459, thus showing a total in hand of £757,182, and they were obliged to go, in order to dress their windows or to provide a respectable balance at their bankers', and pay £500 for a loan of £25,000 for two days.

I have taken all these figures from the Official Receiver's return. I have not put in any of my own, because I know there can be no defence here. I am certain the Attorney General will not defend this matter. I have shown that this company, when their accountant showed that they had a balance against them, superseded the accountant; that they found, just before they issued their balance sheet, that a gift they had made to an allied company of £250,000 was *ultra vires*, and that they had to bring it back; that that coincided almost with the issue of the balance sheet; that they transferred from the London and Globe to the allied companies, the Standard Exploration Corporation and the British and American Corporation, no less than £1,603,456, as to which the brokers were never consulted, and were never informed that such a thing was going to be done, and that, moreover, some three weeks after the whole thing was written back to the London and Globe Finance Corporation. I have shown to the House that £119,769 was omitted from the balance sheet; that the valuation of the shares, £2,332,632 0s. 1d., was greatly inflated; that they manipulated 200,000 £1 shares, of which they only possessed 50,000, to secure a cash balance; that they transferred an asset of 250,000 shares into an asset of £764,285, and I have shown the House how they got together the money to show a decent cash balance at their bankers. I ask the House whether this was not a case to justify a prosecution. Twenty-three days after the last of these transactions the whole thing collapses and they are unable to meet their liabilities. That is the case that I put to the House, and I am sure, as reasonable men, they will see that here is material for the Public Prosecutor. The Lord Chief Justice said through no fault of Mr. Barnes the investigation of this matter was not satisfactory. That is the opinion of the Lord Chief Justice.

I do not wish to make any charge, but it is well known in the City that a Member of the Government is a sleeping partner in this company. I know that that would not influence the hon. and learned Gentleman, but there is the fact.

> "The whole history of the 'Globe' and its allies, which may be said to have been typified by, and to have culminated in, this remarkable balance sheet, appeared to the ordinary business man, when he had mastered its leading features, to be fully deserving of that investigation in a Court of Justice which he assumed it would receive."

He goes on to say—

> "By failing to prosecute in this case the Attorney General is taking a grave responsibility."

I could go into other matters, but I will not. I must say, however, that the Standard Exploration Company issued a prospectus, which has been described by Mr. Justice Kekewich as cunning and tricky, and not only misleading, but distinctly false. The Master of the Rolls would not be able to differ from the conclusion of Mr. Justice Kekewich; and Mr. Justice Romer said the prospectus was untrue in fact, and that Mr. Whitaker Wright's evidence was vague, unsatisfactory, and contradictory. If this had been a bank manager, or a bank clerk with a salary of £100 a year, the law would have been upon him at once. There ought to be no difference. The majesty of the law should not be stern in the case of the poor, and doubtful and hesitating in the case of the rich. There have been aristocratic gentlemen mixed up in this affair. I am very sorry for it, but if men with noble names allow themselves to be connected with companies they must take the consequences of their action. If they use their names as bird-lime for the unwary investor they must take the responsibility, as they draw the salaries. The middle-class "Nonconformist swindler," as he has been called—Jabez Balfour—was brought home to this country and prosecuted. What is sauce for Jabez Balfour must be sauce for the London and Globe Finance Corporation. We are entitled to have the facts of this case probed to the bottom. Fraud and falsification have been openly alleged. Either these directors are much-maligned men or they deserve punishment, and I ask the Attorney General to allow a jury of twelve British men to decide that question. I beg to move.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) formally seconded.

Amendment proposed—

> "At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'And we humbly express our regret that no prosecution has been instituted against

the directors of the London and Globe Finance Corporation.' "—(*Mr. Lambert.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): At the beginning of his speech the hon. Member referred to a certain rumour, which he said he did not believe, to the effect that the absence of action by the Director of Public Prosecutions was due to the connection of some exalted personages in this case. I am not surprised at the hon. Member not believing that rumour; the only thing I am surprised at is that he thought it worth referring to. There is not one vestige of truth in the rumour. Although I do not complain of the hon. Gentleman saying he disbelieves any such idea, I do think hon. Members ought to be very careful how in their places in this great assembly they ever mention rumours of that kind lest ignorant people should suppose there is something in them, otherwise they would not have been mentioned in this House. I think there ought to be a great sense of responsibility on the part of any Member of this House before he even thinks fit to mention matters of this kind here, lest he should give them a fictitious importance. The whole thing is absolutely baseless. The hon. Gentleman in other parts of his speech referred to the fact that aristocratic gentlemen were mixed up in this case. Who those aristocratic gentlemen may be I do not know.

MR. LAMBERT: I said aristocratic directors.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: Who are they?

MR. LAMBERT: Shall I read out the names? As the hon. and learned Gentleman has challenged me, I will read the names from the Official Receiver's list. (The hon. Member read the names of the directors of the London and Globe Finance Corporation, and of the directors of companies promoted by it, and in which it was financially interested, to whom qualification shares were presented.)

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: The hon. Gentleman has read out the names of a great many gentlemen, many of whom were not directors of the London and Globe Finance Corporation, and several of whom are unfortunately now dead. All I can say is that, be they aristocratic or plebeian, it would not make the slightest difference in my decision in regard to the matter of a prosecution. I confess I think it is a matter for grave observation that any Member of this House should condescend to insinuate that the connection of aristocratic gentlemen with any case has in the slightest degree influenced the action of the Attorney General. I am sure there is not an hon. Gentleman in the House who believes it, and it is a matter for very grave observation and for the reflection of the hon. Gentleman in his calmer moments that he should have stooped to make such an insinuation.

MR. LAMBERT: I did not make any insinuations. You challenged me.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: The hon. Gentleman made no insinuations! Then I think it is unfortunate that he should have referred to the fact that aristocratic gentlemen were connected with the case. If he made no insinuation, why did he refer to it?

MR. LAMBERT: Because it was the fact.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: The hon. Gentleman in another part of his speech said that a member of the Government was connected with a firm which had something to do with some of these transactions. Did the hon. Gentleman by that mean to suggest that the fact that a member of the Government was connected with a firm which had something to do with some of these transactions had anything to do with there not being a prosecution in this case?

MR. LAMBERT: Certainly not. I wished the matter to be probed to the bottom in order to show that there was no complicity.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: I put it to every hon. Member in the House whether, when an hon. Member says that a member of the Government is associated with a firm which had something to do with these transactions and that he wants the matter probed to the bottom in order to show that that member of the Government had no complicity, that was not an insinuation? I leave the hon. Member on this point to the judgment of the House and to his own sense of what is becoming when the heat of debate has passed away. I put it to the House that it is a very serious matter that any member of this great and honourable assembly should use his position here for the purpose of putting forward insinuations, in themselves absolutely baseless, and to which no one of any experience or judgment can attach the slightest importance, but to which some ignorant people may attach importance when currency has been given to them by a Member of this House.

The hon. Member entered at some length into the character of the transactions connected with the London and Globe Finance Corporation. Those transactions no one for one moment will defend. Everyone must feel that in their nature they were most reprehensible, and that the persons concerned in them deserve very severe judgment to be passed upon them by all who value commercial integrity and honour. But the question is not one of civil liability. The question is not one of inquiry or investigation. The hon. Member throughout his speech spoke of the propriety of there being a criminal prosecution by the Director of Public Prosecutions as if that were synonymous with an inquiry into the facts connected with these companies. Every hon. Member, more particularly those associated with the profession to which I have the honour to belong, will realise that there is all the difference in the world between a case being proper for inquiry and thorough investigation, and its being proper to institute a criminal prosecution on behalf of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The question to be determined when the Attorney General has to settle whether the Director of Public Prosecutions should take up a particular case, is not whether inquiry and investigation would be desirable, not whether inquiry and prosecution would be a popular thing; the Attorney General has laid upon him a very serious and responsible duty,—viz., that of determining whether in his opinion the Director of Public Prosecutions should take up a case which involves the making of a criminal charge against certain persons. By the Motion of the hon. Member the House is asked to affirm that it regrets a criminal prosecution was not instituted against the directors of the London and Globe Finance Corporation. That is a very different question from desiring that such transactions as those to which the hon. Member has referred should be probed to the bottom. I am sure everyone in the House agrees with the hon. Member when he says that it is desirable that such transactions should be most thoroughly probed, but I desire the House to realise the difference between that question, and other question which will come before the House for decision on this motion—viz., whether a criminal prosecution should have been taken in hand by the Director of Public Prosecutions.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this evening's sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [19th February] to Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign*,

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the question to add the words, 'and we humbly express our regret that no prosecution has been instituted against the directors of the London and Globe Finance Corporation.'"—(*Mr. Lambert.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

SIR ROBERT FINLAY, continuing his speech, said: When the House adjourned in response to the Motion of the hon. Member, I was addressing my remarks to the position of the Director of Public Prosecutions. In this case it is a complete mistake to suppose that the action of the Director of Public Prosecutions prevents any prosecution. The law of England is not the same as that of Scotland, in which the right of prosecution rests entirely with the Government. Anybody in England is at liberty to institute a prosecution, and my having held that this is not a case in which the Director of Public Prosecutions should move does not in the slightest degree interfere with the right of any individual, or any body of persons, who thinks that there is a proper case for a prosecution, to take action. I read in the newspapers that a fund is being raised for the purpose of a prosecution in this case. There is also pending a summons before the judge in the liquidation of the company, with the object of getting the judge to direct the Receiver to take proceedings by way of prosecution. I will not be betrayed into uttering one word which could in any way be considered prejudicial either to that application or to any prosecution, whether by the Receiver or by any private prosecutor, which may ensue under either of the proceedings to which I have referred. I should consider myself unworthy of my position if, even under the greatest provocation, I made a statement or advanced arguments which might be considered to prejudice either the prosecution or the defence in such a matter. Some things I might say might be damaging to a possible defender, and some things I might say might be considered to damage the prospects of a possible prosecution, and if I were to do so in an answer to the invitation of the hon. Member who brought forward this Motion, he would be the very first to denounce me. I trust I shall carry with me the feeling of the House when I say it is impossible for me under these circumstances to follow the hon. Member into the details of this case. I shall be perfectly ready at the proper time to state the reasons which guided my action, shall be prepared to state them fully, and, I hope, give satisfaction to those hon. Gentlemen who have the opportunity of listening to me; but I will not on this occasion enter upon a line which might entail results which, in the administration of the criminal law, I should deplore.

The fact that I considered that the Director of Public Prosecutions should not take up this matter ought not to prejudice, and, so far as I am concerned, will not be allowed directly or indirectly to prejudice, any proceedings which may otherwise be taken. With regard to my own action, the conclusion to which I came was not a hasty or ill-considered conclusion. The matter was most fully considered by me, I had the very best assistance in dealing with this case, which is one of somewhat peculiar difficulty, and formed the subject of repeated and prolonged consultations. After I was able to arrive at a decision with regard to the matters first submitted to me, it was suggested that further evidence might be available. I invited the sending in of further evidence, and some further statements were sent in after an interval of several months. Those statements were carefully considered; and the conclusion I arrived at was that those further statements could not be allowed to vary the decision I had already arrived at, which was that I could not properly say that the Director of Public Prosecutions should put the criminal law in motion in this case. In arriving at that conclusion absolutely no consideration influenced me, except the merits of the question. It is almost surprising that it should be necessary for one occupying my position to say that. Indeed, it is not necessary. The rumours to which the hon. Gentleman who moved this Amendment thought it necessary to refer reflect the utmost discredit upon those who concocted them, and upon those who put them into circulation. I say not a word more in respect to them.

But although I say no more about the details of the case, if the House will bear with me I will submit a few observations on the position of the Director of Public Prosecutions, and the Attorney General, whose direction he is bound to obey as to putting the criminal law in action. The duty which the law throws upon the Attorney General in regard to putting the criminal law in motion is one of the most anxious and responsible which any man could well have thrown upon him. It would be a great relief to every one filling the office, which I have the honour to hold, if it were left to the departments to determine whether there should or should not be a prosecution in matters relating to the business of the departments. A decision might conceivably be arrived at on the ground of general policy, and because it was considered that, on the whole, it was desirable that the matters should be investigated. But the law has thought it right to say that before the machinery for the investigation of a crime was put into motion there should be the intervention of a responsible officer, who is answerable to this House, and that he should determine whether the case was one suitable for a criminal prosecution—whether on the merits of a particular case it was right that there should be a criminal prosecution. That is the only question which any one who occupies that office would consider. In discharging that duty the Attorney General is exercising a function of an almost judicial nature. It is his duty to consider the particular case; it is not his duty to consider whether, on general grounds of policy, or on grounds of popular agitation, an inquiry may, or may not, be desirable. In the discharge of that duty the Attorney General and the Director of Public Prosecutions will be actuated by no respect of persons whatever. I do not believe there is a single Member of this House, except the hon. Member who moved the Amendment, who would have insinuated the contrary. As long as the House honours me with its confidence I shall endeavour to discharge my duties in this respect without fear and without favour. In this matter I claim the support of every one who values the independence and the purity of the administration of the criminal law. The matter is one of principle, which far transcends the importance of the particular case out of which this discussion has arisen. And I ask the House with confidence to say that, in a matter of this kind, it is the duty of the Attorney General, discarding all side issues and all considerations which ought not to influence anyone in determining as to whether or not the criminal law should be put in motion, to arrive, to the best of his ability, at a decision on the merits of the particular case before him, so far as they bear on the question whether it is right that the Director of Public Prosecutions should be put in motion.

SIR ROBERT REID said he regretted that he could not support his hon. friend who had brought this Motion on this occasion, and he thought he would be running away from his duty if he did not say a word with regard to this extremely important subject. He was very sorry that the Attorney General had exhibited some warmth with regard to his hon. friend, who he did not think intended to make any insinuation against the honour of the Attorney General. His hon. friend had acted from a sense of public duty just as much as the Attorney General. There was another thing in regard to which he believed his hon. friend was right. Not speaking of this particular case at all, he did believe most firmly that, unless the sharp edge of the criminal law was applied, whenever necessary, for the purpose of suppressing abominable frauds, especially in connection with companies, they would never be able to deal with them as they desired. Since he had been in the House he forgot how many Acts they had passed for the purpose of suppressing frauds in prospectuses, and in other ways, that were so common. Unless they invoked the terrors of criminal prosecutions they could not prevent what was going on. So far he was heartily with his hon. friend, who had put the case forward in a most temperate way. But what they had really to consider now was whether the House should censure the Government for not directing a particular kind of prosecution by the Public Prosecutor—in fact, what might be called a State prosecution. The Attorney General, who was the responsible officer, declared that, after very careful investigation and after taking the advice of other very competent persons, he had come to the conclusion that this was not a case in which he thought he could direct the Public Prosecutor to act. He knew very well those who would advise the Attorney General—he had been advised by some of them himself; they were most competent advisers—and he knew that they were influenced by no desire except to see public justice done. The point that had to be considered was not simply the question whether a criminal prosecution was or was not to take place. The question was whether it was to be a State prosecution. It must be remembered that in this country it was open to any one to institute a prosecution, and if the case went for trial, and the grand jury returned a true bill, the prosecution would be paid for out of rates or local funds.

[AN HON. MEMBER: To what amount?] And quite apart from that, if people wished to prosecute they could do so themselves out of public subscriptions. He was rather surprised to hear that interruption. The cost of the prosecutions he referred to did come out of public funds, and if those who prosecuted thought that the public funds did not make an ample allowance, it was competent for them to use private subscriptions. That being the case, hon. Members had to ask themselves whether they were prepared to overrule the decision and declare that the Public Prosecutor ought to have taken it up. But let them reflect. What materials had they on which to overrule this decision? Would anyone ask himself what knowledge he had of a criminal case? He took a very serious view of criminal prosecutions. While he thought there should be no shrinking from inflicting the criminal law, he knew it was a grave and a distressing thing to have to order a criminal prosecution. For himself he declared that he did not know what the materials here were for a prosecution. He had heard his hon. friend state the facts very clearly from his point of view; he stated there was a balance sheet falsely made up; and that, he understood, was the main ground of his action. Were they, then, to accept that statement, and accept it as the ground for over-riding the mature decisions of the Attorney General and instituting a criminal prosecution? He was not prepared to take that course. He looked up to and respected the House of Commons above any institution in the country, but much as he looked up to it in his opinion it was not, and never had been, a reliable body to exercise any kind of judicial functions. From the time of Sir Robert Walpole, who was unfairly sent to the Tower on a charge of embezzlement, down to the proceedings about Mr. Bradlaugh, twenty years ago, the House had never distinguished itself in this way; and here they were asked to overrule what was stated to be, and what was, a judicial decision given. He thought this: that where a Government believed that criminal guilt existed in a case of this kind it was their duty to order a prosecution; but, if they did not do that, unless a clear case could be made out or some improper motive shown—unless it was perfectly obvious that it was a case of neglected duty—he was not prepared to take the responsibility of urging that the terrible weapon of the criminal law should be used against a private person.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) thought his hon. friend had an extremely good case for his Motion, and he had put it to the House extremely well. The facts were undisputed that a fraudulent balance sheet had been issued, and that on the faith of it credit had been obtained. With all due deference to his hon. and learned friend the Member for Dumfries, he thought there could be no worse offence than that. It was as grave an offence as obtaining money from a shopkeeper on a bogus cheque. He had not much sympathy with the shareholders of this company, because they ought to have known that it was a highly speculative undertaking; but the fact remained that they had been induced to buy its shares by the fraudulent balance sheet which had been placed before them. While he admitted that the Attorney General could have no object in view but to do what was right, he could not conceive on the facts how his hon. and learned friend arrived at the decision that a prosecution ought not to ensue. As to the statement of the Member for Dumfries that any person could prosecute in the case, and that the State would pay the expense, he would ask his hon. and learned friend whether he was prepared to take up the brief in the circumstances? If so, he had no doubt but a prosecution would be instituted.

* MR. DUKE (Plymouth) said it was the boast of our jurisprudence that the administration of the criminal law was free from the interference of Party or Government—free from the interference of any influence save that of the duty which was felt by an aggrieved person or public authority to bring an offender to justice. No private person had a right to institute criminal proceedings unless he believed that a criminal offence had been committed, and unless he proceeded with the sole purpose of bringing the offender to justice. He could not do it in order to expose a scandal, or to preach

a particular commercial or moral doctrine; and it would be setting up a grave danger in public life if the restraint imposed in the case of a private person were removed in the case of the authority which was entrusted with the enforcement of the criminal law, backed by all the resources of the State. He hoped the House would not take the perilous step of setting itself up as a judge on a case of this kind. What chance of escape would an accused person have, in a case arousing public excitement, if the indictment against him was endorsed by the House of Commons? He had defended prisoners in Treasury prosecutions, and no greater burden could be thrown upon a lawyer than that of defending a man against whom a responsible public authority thought there was a case upon which the jury ought to convict. Well, hon. Members from Ireland know something about this. Some of them knew it by practical and unhappy experience. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: We have been condemned before we were tried.] They all knew quite well that it did not need a true bill from the House of Commons to enforce a conviction in some circumstances. Hon. Members thought it might result from strong feeling in some quarter or another. [NATIONALIST cries of "Hear, hear!"] But where was the strong feeling in this case? As far as the facts relating to this matter were concerned, the chief centre of feeling had been in the City of London. There meetings had been held with a view to the prosecution of a particular person for the offences which were the subject of this Resolution. Among the aggrieved persons in this case were some of the wealthiest in the country, and no doubt they had been advised. He suspected that their real difficulty was that they had been advised that if they embarked upon a prosecution they would be undertaking a very difficult enterprise.

But was this a case which needed the intervention of the Public Prosecutor in order to prevent a miscarriage of justice? If the aggrieved persons were advised or were convinced that they had a case in which they might reasonably hope for a conviction, there was no difficulty in the way of taking action on the score of lack of funds. The aggrieved persons had been advised and had not prosecuted. How could the Government be censured for not taking action when their legal adviser had told them that he did not believe there could be a conviction on any indictment he could tender to a jury? The Attorney General might have taken the easy course of directing a prosecution in order to shield himself from unworthy suspicions out of the House and unworthy attacks within the House; but, had he done so, could any action be more contemptible? It had been said that this was not an attack upon the hon. and learned Gentleman's honour. Then what was it? Was it an attack upon his judgment? It must be one of the two. The Attorney General's honour was established long before he became a Member of the House of Commons in a profession which was jealous of the honour of its members. The hon. and learned Gentleman had shown that he knew what the law was upon this question.

Before parting with the subject he would ask leave to deal briefly with the only grounds upon which any person could present an indictment to a jury with regard to this company. One of those grounds was the issuing of a fraudulent prospectus. He did not believe that anyone considered that any of the prospectuses issued by this company amounted to a criminal offence. Another ground was the issuing of a fraudulent balance sheet. Anything more scandalous than the matters which were proved in regard to the issuing of the balance sheets of the London and Globe Company and some of the other associated companies it would be difficult to conceive. But the legal offence, if it had been committed, could be proved in half-an-hour. The whole matter had been the subject of examination of the persons concerned before an official in the High Courts, and every relevant fact appeared in the shorthand notes of those examinations, which were open to everybody concerned to see, including the gentlemen who held indignation meetings in the City. The Attorney General had come to the conclusion that in these depositions there was not a case upon which he could warrant the expenditure of the public funds. There was one other ground, and that was a prosecution for "rigging the market." So far as appeared from any facts which had been published or discussed that offence was not alleged. He did not wish to apologise for the persons who were involved in this scandal, and who had issued those false balance sheets. If means could be found of bringing the persons implicated to justice, no one would be more delighted than he should be, but the question here was whether this House should intervene and, without evidence before it and without express knowledge, should censure the responsible Minister of the Crown because he, in the exercise of his judgment, found there was no case for a criminal prosecution, under the circumstances alleged, which he would undertake upon his responsibility. He submitted that such a censure would be unjust, and however desirable it might be that a prosecution should take place, this House should abide by the judgment of the chief Law Officer of the Crown, in whose honour and integrity they all had confidence.

MR WILLIAM McARTHUR (Cornwall, St. Austell) stating the view of the ordinary plain business man in this matter, said he never felt more strongly what a misfortune it was for the commercial community that they could not have in this House a commercial legal opinion rather than the purely legal opinion with which they had been favoured by the Attorney General. Personally, having lost no money over Mr Whitaker Wright, he had no vindictive desire to see him prosecuted; but statements had been made which to a plain layman were astounding. A sum of £5,000 was necessary to carry out the proposed prosecution, and subscriptions were invited from all the sufferers in this gigantic fraud, and yet his hon. and learned friend the Member for Dumfries told him that anybody could prosecute anybody else for nothing, and that the Government was bound to see anybody through a prosecution of this kind. To his lay mind that was a statement which was absolutely unintelligible. The Attorney General had treated the case as if it were a set of casual statements made by a casual Member of Parliament; but the facts were not the facts of the hon. Member for South Molton, but of an officer of the law, the Official Receiver in Bankruptcy, backed by the opinion of three of the most eminent judges on the Bench. Those were the facts which the Attorney General held out as being the irresponsible statements of his hon. friend.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: I never said anything like that.

MR. W. McARTHUR said that when, in these circumstances, the Attorney General got up and said there was no case for a prosecution, he could only ask — "What is the good of the law as a protector of ordinary honest commercial men of business?" His hon. friend the Member for Plymouth said that the interest in this matter was confined to the City of London. He begged to assure him, from personal knowledge, that he was absolutely wrong.

MR. DUKE: I did not say that it was confined to the City of London. I said that it chiefly centred in the City of London.

MR. McARTHUR said he had had letters from all parts of the country from people who had been absolutely ruined by this fraudulent swindle. If the law was helpless in a case of this kind, and the House of Commons ought to do nothing but accept the assurance that it was powerless, then the law was no use to the commercial community of the City of London, and the sooner it was altered the better. For his own part, not being a lawyer, and therefore not bound by that code which appeared to make lawyers alway defend each other, he should, in the interests of ordinary commercial morality and the protection of honest people, most unhesitatingly vote for the Amendment.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CARSON, Dublin University): I may perhaps, be allowed to intervene in this debate for a very few moments, because, of course, the House will readily understand that I was associated in the consideration of the course the Attorney General ought to take, and in the consultation to which he has referred, and although the responsibility for the action taken rests, and must rest, upon him, my hon. and learned friend, in this case, as in all cases of importance, consulted not merely myself as a Law Officer but also others who were eminent in the criminal law and in the administration of it in this country. In the first place let me say that this is not an Amendment directed against the Government but against the Attorney General. [AN HON. MEMBER: "No."] I will tell you why it is not directed against the Government. It is one of these matters in which the sole responsibility for what is done must rest upon, and must be taken by, the Attorney General, and if the Cabinet tomorrow were to order and direct the Attorney General to institute a prosecution in this or any other case he should refuse, and rightly refuse, to do so unless it commended itself to him upon a full consideration of the facts and the law appertaining thereto. What is the reason why the hon. Member who has just spoken is going to vote for such a Motion? Because he says that the commercial world has been shocked by the revelations.

MR. W. MCARTHUR: The Official Receiver has been shocked.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: Very well, that the Official Receiver has been shocked. Is the hon. Member aware that one of the persons called in to advise and to express his opinion with a view to guiding the Attorney General was the Official Receiver, who, he says, has been shocked by this case? Is the hon. Member aware that the Official Receiver brought all the documents before that officer to the notice of the Attorney General and those engaged with him in the consultation? Therefore, if that is so, and if the Attorney General has not overlooked these matters, and has taken the proper course in consulting these parties, is the hon. Member, who confessed that he is not a lawyer, going to set up his judgment in the matter against that of the Attorney General, who has had all the facts before him in coming to a conclusion in the matter? From what I know of my hon. friend, I think that before he does so he will ask himself on what grounds he does so. Of course the hon. Member has a right to do so. Is it because the hon. Member believes that the Attorney General has acted dishonourably in the exercise of his discretion? Does he believe that he acted to the best of his ability? I am perfectly sure that the hon Member does. This is not a matter of one, two, or three hours consultation or consideration at all. The decision was arrived at in the most deliberate way in the investigation of the facts which the officials were able to bring before the Attorney General in his official capacity; and, therefore, as far as honesty of opinion, care, and caution in the framing of that opinion are concerned, I am sure the hon. Member would say that no case can be made out as against the Attorney General. What is the Attorney General blamed for? Is he blamed for having come to a wrong conclusion? [Cries of "Yes."] I hear hon. Members say "Yes." Do hon. Members think that upon a short debate in the House, without having the facts or materials before them, they are able to re-try a case which the Attorney General has at great labour already tried for the purpose of seeing whether it would exercise his discretion to order a public prosecution or not? I say that is absolutely ridiculous. You might as well at once abolish the office of Attorney General in relation to these prosecutions if upon each occasion when certain hon. Members think he has come to a wrong conclusion, they, upon statements brought before them, and upon such a discussion as is taking place in this House, take upon themselves to review the decision he has come to, and ask the House to vote that the Attorney General was wrong after having honestly, and to the best of his ability, come to a conclusion. That is really what it comes to. It is said that Mr. Whitaker Wright published a false balance-sheet. I believe that he did. I think that it is an admitted fact that this was done; but will any one get up and say that a man can be prosecuted because he publishes a false balance-sheet? [Cries of "He ought to be," and "Why not alter the law?"] Then the House must pass a law. But surely, if it is necessary to pass a law for that purpose, there ought not to be a vote of censure on the Attorney General because he does not prosecute under a law that does not exist. The hon. Member for Peckham, who, I am sure, has no ill-feeling towards the Attorney General, says that certain persons were, by reason of this balance sheet, induced to give credit. Is that an indictable offence?

MR. LAMBERT: It is an attempt to defraud.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: The question is not so simple as hon. Gentlemen imagine. These are all matters with which the Attorney General is competent to deal—at all events, as competent to deal as the ordinary layman; and, once you admit that the Attorney General is honest and competent, you cannot review his action in this House without turning the whole legal procedure of the country into a farce. We are told that a large number of shareholders have been injured by reason of this false report, doctored report, fraudulent report, if you like. Is it not an extraordinary thing that not a single shareholder in this company has, upon that report, taken a civil action to get back his money from Mr. Whitaker Wright, who is perfectly well able to pay? Is it because they have sympathy with Mr. Whitaker Wright, or is it because they have the same advice that such an action is not maintainable? It is also said that there are a number of shareholders and creditors burning to take action, and that what deters them is the cost of the proceedings. Personally, I venture to say that the cost of the proceedings has little to say to it; but the House should not imagine that the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries has stated what the rule is as to the demand for costs when private individuals take these proceedings. The London and Globe Finance Corporation is in liquidation; and I am told that the liquidator has spoken very strongly of the frauds committed by Mr. Whitaker Wright. It is open to any of the shareholders to go before the liquidator and ask him to allow a prosecution to be brought, and to have the costs defrayed out of the assets of the London and Globe Corporation. Has any shareholder done that? And if not, why not? Everybody is burning for a prosecution, and yet no one will take the responsibility for it. There is also the power of charging Mr. Whitaker Wright with malfeasance, and having the matter investigated by the liquidator; and if any material facts can be brought out, they can have them so brought out, and subsequently laid before the Public Prosecutor. The truth of the matter is that there is remedy after remedy open to the parties who are said to complain of the decision of the Attorney General; and yet not one of them has moved a step. It is said that the shareholders are writing every day to Members of Parliament. I think hon. Members would find in some cases that they were men who bought their shares as a speculation for a shilling or eighteenpence, when the London and Globe had practically smashed up. All these circumstances tend to show that the advisers of those who have remedies open to them and do not take them have come to much the same conclusion as that of the Attorney General, on whose shoulders rests a very much greater responsibility. What the House is now being asked to do is what the Press has been doing for months past, and what makes the administration of the law all the more difficult—and that is to force the hand of the Attorney-General and to overrule the discretion which he properly exercises on the facts which are laid before him.

*SIR JOHN BRUNNER (Cheshire Northwich) said they had heard from the hon. and learned Member the Attorney General that reprehensible things had been done; they heard also from the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth that scandalous things had been done, and that it was quite obvious by whom they had been done. They heard from the Solicitor General that a fraudulent balance-sheet had been published, and that it was quite obvious by whom it was published. They heard from the Attorney General that the persons who had done this deserved to be punished. The Solicitor General had tried to persuade the House that this Amendment was an attack upon the honour of the Attorney General. That was said merely to prejudice the case. It was not an attack upon the honour of the Attorney General, but what they did find fault with was that, according to the law, the person who was to blame could not be prosecuted by the authorities constituted to perform that duty, and that the Government had made no proposal to amend the law. The Solicitor General said this was not an attack on the Government.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: I did not say so.

*SIR JOHN BRUNNER said he would repeat that the hon. and learned Gentleman said this was not an attack on the Government. Well, it was the first time he had heard that doctrine enunciated in that House. An Amendment to the Address is always held to be a censure of the Government, but he was prepared to denounce that as an absurd fiction. He thought the House ought to be able at all times to express an honest opinion in an Address to the Crown without its being represented that they intended to attack the Government.

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said that no one could enter into this debate, after what had been said, without a compelling sense of public responsibility. It had been asked what was the law worth if it could not meet such a case; and it might well be asked what was the Public Prosecutor worth if he could not deal with a question of this kind. While he had every respect for the numerous counsels' opinions offered gratuitously that evening, he must say that he ventured to respectfully differ from them, unusually unanimous though they were. The Solicitor General had said that it was clear that a false balance sheet had been published, and he had also said the Act had yet to be passed which would make that a criminal offence. He differed from the hon. and learned Gentleman. He believed that the publication—and he said it with a high written authority—of a false balance sheet, which was the means of obtaining almost millions from the confiding public, was an offence at Common Law. At any rate it might be, in his view, made the subject of a conviction for conspiracy at common law, and when there were several defendants, in one sense there was less difficulty in establishing conspiracy. He believed the case also to be within the terms of the Criminal Law Consolidation Acts of 1861, and also the Companies Act, 1862. But he rose very largely that night to say that if that were not the case, it would be a great discouragement to those Members who had served upon the Departmental Committee of the Board of Trade only a year or two ago—in 1889—to revise the Companies Acts, and to frame a Bill, which afterwards became an Act, containing a clause which, at any rate, had apparently been overlooked by the Solicitor General, when he said that the Act had yet to be passed to deal with what he admitted to be a false balance sheet. The material part of the clause ran: "If any person in any return, report, certificate, or balance-sheet, makes a statement, false in any material part, knowing it to be false, he shall be guilty of a misdemeanour." He failed to find a difficulty in interpreting these words; and having served on the Committee, and having had the advantage of discussions with Mr. Justice Buckley, Lord Davey, and other colleagues like Sir John Hollams, he believed it to be largely declaratory of what was the Common Law bearing on the subject.

He was very far from partaking in any censure on the Attorney General, either officially or personally, or the Government for their inaction in this matter. In any case he would be very reluctant to do so; but he nevertheless thought it would not be consistent with loyalty to his profession of the law if he were to give or not to give a silent vote without expressing his individual opinion on this most extraordinary case of alleged stupendous fraud, followed by absolute impunity. He asked the House to dismiss from their mind the fringes of the case and the mere phrases used by his hon. friend. He was quite sure that his hon. friend did not intend to impute anything to anybody in bringing forward this Motion, and he was also sure that references to personal honour were altogether out of place. The suggestion of a Government conspiracy to suppress the consequences of a crime was equally absolutely inadmissible, and he certainly would not recognise, in such a non-political matter, the technical suggestion that in taking a particular course one was expressing censure. He preferred to accept the words of the Attorney General himself that he was responsible to the House. He agreed with the Attorney General when he said that a prosecution would be a very serious responsibility; but, it should be remembered, that there would be previously a searching magisterial investigation. And, in his opinion, if the admitted falsity of the balance-sheet were proved, coupled with the inevitable inferences of fraud from the vibration of paper balances, just at the moments when they were financially required, and with the other circumstances detailed in the reports of the Official Receiver, and the examinations before the Registrar, the onus — which was always, in such cases, an important consideration—of displacing those inferences from facts, and of rebutting the presumptions of intentional fraud, would be shifted from the prosecution to the accused. He maintained that on the facts as presented by the Official Receiver, there was a *primâ facie* case—and, after all, that was the whole question — which demanded investigation in the interests of justice and of this House, whose concern it was to see that justice was impartially administered without regard to persons or to classes. They were not trying the case, and he quite granted that the mode proposed in the Amendment of dealing with the case was not the only one, for not only could any individual, technically, prosecute, but the Liquidator might do so by leave of the court, but, in any event, there would be almost insuperable difficulty in dealing with the matter from that point of view. He ventured to say that even if there were any funds, as suggested by the Attorney General, they would be quite inadequate for justice to be done to the public. The very expensive preliminary investigation alone involved such large sums that no individual ought to be asked to assume the responsibility. Therefore, it was that the Public Prosecutor existed, and they were asking him to vindicate his existence and his utility. He also ventured to say that if the law confessed itself impotent to deal with a matter of this kind it would be a great reflection upon the administration of justice in this country. He had felt great reluctance in dealing with this subject, but it was necessary to protect large bodies of men and women, shareholders, and creditors and the public, who, if they were speculative, were nevertheless entitled to justice. They were a body of people who had no cohesion; and when it was found that the result of transactions like this was illimitable misery in numerous directions, great damage to the commerical character of our country, a deterrent to the investment of capital, and a reflection on our whole public judicial system, something should certainly be attempted to remedy the grievance, and to put to the test of legal judicial inquiry and investigation in the magisterial and other courts, whether there had, in fact, been falsity and fraud, and, by argument in open court, whether or not, in point of law, there had been a criminal and indictable offence.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I need hardly say that I do not intend, Mr. Speaker, to obtrude any legal opinions upon the House, not merely because the hour is late, but because I am incapable of giving an opinion on such a subject which is worth listening to. But I think I have gathered what it is that has influenced most of the speakers, and many of those who have listened to them, who feel that the House of Commons ought to take some action on the present occasion. I do not misinterpret the feeling of the House when I say that there is no man on either side of the House who, either in public or in private, or even to himself, has made any suggestion of suspicion as to the motives by which the Attorney General was actuated in the course that he has taken. There is probably no man in this House, not even those who, like myself, are entirely ignorant of the law, who doubts that the Attorney General's advice has not only been honestly given, but has been given by a man eminently qualified to give advice upon any matter connected with the laws of this country. The third observation I think I may make with general assent is that it is not intended on this occasion to make an attack upon His Majesty's Government. It is perfectly true, as an hon. Gentleman said opposite, that every Amendment to the Address is an attack upon the Government, and in that sense, of course, this is an attack upon the Government; but it is not an attack upon them in a matter in which they have any discretion. It is due to the Attorney General to say in the clearest manner, not only in the interests of the Attorney General but in the interest of all, that his position as the Director of Public Prosecutions is a position absolutely independent of any of his colleagues. It is not in the power of the Government to direct the Attorney General to direct a prosecution. No Government would do such a thing; no Attorney General would tolerate its being done. Though it is, I believe, peculiar to the British Constitution that political officers, like the Lord Chancellor or the Attorney General, should occupy what are in fact great judicial positions, nobody doubts that in the exercise of their judicial or quasi-judicial functions they act entirely independently of their colleagues, and with a strict and sole regard to the duty they have to perform to the public. That is the position of my learned friend, and that is the position of the Government in connection with this subject.

Now I pass to what I believe to be the animating motive of almost all the speeches we have heard tonight in favour of the Amendment. I think that motive is a feeling of deep and profound indignation at the fraudulent transactions in which Mr. Whitaker Wright has been engaged. Nobody can have even a most cursory knowledge of those transactions without being conscious that if these are things which can be done in a great commercial centre like London, in connection with a vast transaction like that of the London and Globe, and can be done with impunity, a great fault lies somewhere. The only question is where that evil lies. I venture respectfully to say that no man can have listened to the debate tonight and have weighed—I will not say the reasoned legal view of my learned friend the Attorney General, because I imagine he was precluded by the fact that there were proceedings pending in this matter from going into the details of the reasons which have influenced his judgment—but have listened to what he said, or what the Solicitor General told us of the enormous pains taken by the Law Officers of the Crown in examining this case, without admitting that the fault does not lie either with the Director of Public Prosecutions, or with those who advised him. The fault lies in the law. [An Hon. Member on the Opposition side of the House: No, no.] Is that a lawyer or a layman? Does the hon. Gentleman imagine that it is the jury which make the law? My hon. friend below the Gangway says that in his view an offence has been committed.

*Sir ALBERT ROLLIT: Under the Statutes of 1861 and 1862, and at Common Law.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, both the question of Common Law and the question of Statute Law have been critically and carefully examined by the Law Officers of the Crown, and they, rightly or wrongly, take a different view from that held by my hon. friend. Whilst all admit that if such scandalous frauds are allowed to go unpunished the fault lies somewhere, I venture to say to the House that the fault does not lie with my learned friend, but with the language of the statute. The phraseology of the statute is evidently intended to protect the shareholders in a company and the creditors of a company against fraudulent prospectuses; and it is a very grave omission in the framing of the statute that it does not provide an adequate remedy against fraud, however gross, however scandalous, which is not directed against these persons. My learned friend's attention has been called to this defect in our law by the very scandalous and painful case of Mr. Whitaker Wright and the Globe Finance Company; and he has expressed his opinion to the Government that there ought to be an amendment to the law making such practices absolutely impossible. The Government, advised in that sense by my learned friend, entirely share his view, and think that an amendment of that kind ought to be introduced as soon as possible. I need hardly say we shall take steps to carry that view into effect. Meanwhile, what

I ask the House to do is to make the law what it ought to be, and not to attack a judicial officer whose duty it is to administer the law as he finds it. I cannot imagine a worse precedent than that this House should constitute itself a kind of grand jury in criminal matters; that, moved by passions which in this case we all share, and which, I believe, are amply justified by the facts, we should endeavour to compel a judicial officer to do that which, in his conscience, he believes he ought not to do. Let the House reserve itself for the function for which it is fitted—the amendment of the law—bringing it into a condition to meet the needs of the community, and into harmony with the general principles of justice. I hope and believe the House will not differ from the general principle I have laid down, and will be content with the pledge I have given, that we shall endeavour to amend the law in accordance with that broad view of commercial morality so ably defended by my hon. friend. We shall do that which it is our function to do, and not set a precedent which, in this case, may only do an injury to the Government and my hon. and learned friend, but which, followed in different circumstances by the House, may inflict a real blow on the criminal jurisprudence of this country.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 115; Noes, 166. (Division List No. 4.)

AYES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*)
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bowles, T. G. (*Lynn Regis*)
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Cawley, Frederick
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Saml. T. (*Glamorgan*)
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Helme, Norval Watson
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Law, H. Alex. (*Donegal, W.*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lowther, Rt Hn. James (*Kent*
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph, (*Louth South*)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, K'd'l (*Tipperary Mid.*
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (*Mayo, N.*)
O'Kelly, James (*Roscommon N.*)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (*Waterford*)
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Samuel, S. M. (*Whitechapel*)
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C R (*Northants*
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glamorgan, E.*)
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tully, Jasper
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*)
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (*Norfolk*)
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*
Whiteley, George (*York, W.R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, John (*Durham, Mid.*)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Lambert and Mr. Soares.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig, Charles C. (*Antrim, S.*)
Cranborne, Lord
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Davenport, William Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (*St. Albans*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gray, Ernest (*West Ham*)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robt. Wm.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Henderson, Sir Alexander
Hobhouse, RtHnH (*Somrst E*
Hope, J. F. (*Sheff., B'tside*)
Hoult, Joseph
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (*Yorks, N.R.*)
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (*Salop*
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawson, John Grant
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Macdona, John Cumming
Majendie, James A. H.
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Mitchell, William
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, RtHnA. Graham (*Bute*
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes Ebenezer
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Reid, SirR. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hon. M. W (*Stalybridge*
Ritchie, RtHon Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Sumuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (*Liverpool*)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Sandys, Lieut-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, MajJ. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M.H. (*Renfrew*
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, HC(*Northmb. Tyneside*)
Smith, JamesParker(*Lanarks.*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edwd. M.
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. H.
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (*Notts*
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (*Yorks*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R (*Bath*
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W.H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES— Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Main Question again proposed.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN AND PUBLIC COMPANIES.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said the question with which his Amendment dealt went to the very root of public life. He wished to insist on the incompatibility of the union of the offices of Ministers of the Crown with those of directors of public companies. The speech to which the House had just listened was a fitting introduction to the question he wished to raise, although the Prime Minister, who knew so many things, was not versed in finance or in criminal law. The impress of finance had been very prominent in recent discussions, and the phrase "due regard to economy" was replaced in the King's Speeches by references to considerable expenditure and to Imperial responsibilities. He would think that the first step in reducing the public expenditure would be to lessen the number of directors in the Ministry. This question had frequently been brought before the House. So far back as 1891, Mr. Goschen, who was then the Leader of the House, was asked if the Government would grant a return of its members who held directorships in public companies. He immediately got very angry and insisted that it would be invidious to comply with the request. Then the matter was in abeyance till 1895, when the Member for King's Lynn asked the First Lord if he was aware that twenty of the new Ministers held sixty directorships among them, and if they would be called upon to resign them. The right hon. Gentleman, in reply, said he would not institute such an inquisitorial investigation, and there the affair rested. Four years ago he himself moved an Amendment to the Address calling attention to the incompatibility of the union of the two offices, and a curious thing happened. No fewer than eighteen gentlemen took part in the discussion, and of them all only four had a word to say in favour of the union of the offices. One of the four was the First Lord himself, who was not a director, but who, out of a mistaken feeling of chivalry, defended his colleagues—thereby making a very considerable mistake; and another speaker was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, a former Finance Minister, whose absence from the House he deplored. Thanks to the influence of the Government, the Motion was defeated in the House. But the opinion outside the House was very different, for nearly every paper in the Metropolis—including *The Times*—insisted on the impropriety of the union of the two offices. On the 8th May, 1900, he again brought forward a Motion directing the attention of the country and of the House of Commons to the matter, and was defeated, curiously enough, by a majority of eleven—a majority which included no fewer than twenty Ministers of the Crown, of whom eleven held among them nineteen directorships. Now he had no personal feeling towards any Member of the House in this matter, but he would like to give the names of those eleven Ministers. They were Mr. Anstruther, Mr. Gerald Balfour, Mr. Akers Douglas, Mr. Fellowes, Mr. Hayes Fisher, Sir John Gorst, Lord George Hamilton, Mr. Walter Long, Mr. W. E. G. Macartney, Mr. A. G. Murray and Mr. Ritchie. They were the men who defeated his Motion, and he said, without any hesitation whatsoever, that the public opinion of this country and of the House itself was in favour of the widest possible chasm separating Ministers on the Front Bench from the front pages of prospectuses. He was happy to know that the Radical leaders had adopted the principle laid down by Mr. Gladstone of insisting on the resignation of company directorships as a preliminary to the acceptance of public office. What were the cardinal principles on which this Motion was supported? The principle which he maintained was that Ministers of the Crown, when they held directorships, could not liberate themselves from the suspicion that arose from the conflict of the administration of their Department and their interests as company directors.

When the vote of a Minister of the Crown was impugned in that House on account of his connection with a public company, all his colleagues voted straight for him like soldiers on parade, and thus he was sure of thirty-one or thirty-two votes in his favour. Mr. Gladstone had said that he hated the idea of the slightest inequality between Members, but there was one power entrusted only to a Minister of the Crown, that of imposing a charge on the public funds. Let them imagine what a situation would be created if the President of the Board of Trade, in his zeal, wanted to bring in a comprehensive measure for railway reform! He would have to submit it to a Cabinet no fewer than seven of whom were railway directors. He remembered when Mr. Mundella, as honourable a man as ever entered the House, resigned his position at the Board of Trade owing to his connection with a public company. No man, consistently with the dignity of the public service, could act as Minister of the Crown and at the same time be a paid servant of a trading company. Every person who entered into the service of the State should give his whole time to that service, and not place himself in a position in which there was any possibility of his public and private duties coming into conflict. His Amendment, he admitted, was worded strongly, but it was not so strong as the denunciation of the late Lord Russell of Killowen, who said that the union of the positions of Minister of the Crown and company director constituted a perfect scandal in public life. The great majority of the heads of Departments in the present Government were company directors. The Chancellor of the Exchequer who, by virtue of his office, was the head of the Civil Service in this country, was a director in two public companies.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): No.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he was delighted to hear even of that late repentance; he was glad the right hon. Gentleman had shed them, although he had held them until a year ago. Under the rules of the service he was bound to censure, if not dismiss, a civil servant for acting as a company director, and how could he do that if he were himself breaking the rule. Might he not be told "Physician heal thyself?" He would now come, by an easy transition, from the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Secretary of State for War. He was a gentleman of many parts, and he excelled in them all according to the opinion of certain hon. Members opposite. He was a man of wonderful and versatile genius, and he was also a company director. He had lately posed in a military aspect, and had received royal salutes as a militia officer. He, in his capacity as Secretary of State for War, would cashier any poor officer who had nothing but his pay and who was induced to take a directorship. Yet he was a company director himself. When he first directed attention to the right hon. Gentleman's companies they were the mystic number of seven. That number was reduced to five, then to three, and now the right hon. Gentleman was director of only one company. It was the right hon. Gentleman's pet lamb, and he would tell the House something about it. That wonderful financial genius, who was not at all unknown to the Treasury Bench—he meant the revered Mr. Hooley—in whose case a prosecution was inconvenient and unsuitable—used to say that the principal thing in a prospectus was the front page, and that he had paid no less than £60,000 for a good front page. Now the right hon. Gentleman was a famous man; his fame had extended to what Mr. Austin, the Poet Laureate of the Party opposite, called the "gold reef city." An advertisement appeared in a Johannesburg paper setting forth the directors of the Rock Life Assurance Company, and they included, in double-leaded type, "The Right Hon. St. John Brodrick, M.P., Secretary of State for War." When attention was drawn to it, directions were given that the name of the Secretary of State for War should appear in small type, and not be double leaded. He was no longer to appear as a "double-barrelled front pager."

MR. STRUTT (Essex, Maldon) said that the advertisement appeared without the authority of the Secretary of State for War, and was inserted by the agent of the company in Johannesburg. Immediately it was discovered it was corrected by cable.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he thought the Secretary of State for War was able to defend himself, even though he could not defend his office.

MR. STRUTT said the right hon. Gentleman had not asked him to defend him.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said there was one observation he felt bound to make, which he thought would anticipate an argument which the First Lord of the Treasury might advance in his reply. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman would reply very well, because he knew nothing about the subject. It might be said that Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench, many of whom were not wealthy men, should be allowed to eke out the pittance given to them by an ungrateful and parsimonious country by accepting directorships. At present eighteen Ministers, the greatest geniuses the earth had ever produced, were starving themselves on salaries amounting to £93,000 per annum, and they held fourteen directorships. He stated, and he would defy contradiction, that thirty-three out of fifty-six Ministers of the Crown who constituted the present Administration held sixty-eight directorships. In that was included the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had now been converted, and, therefore, the correct number of Ministers holding directorships was thirty-two, and they held no fewer then sixty-eight directorships. Out of the 670 members of the House only thirty-two per cent. were directors, but more than fifty per cent. of the members of the Government, who ought to give all their time to the country, were directors. Ministers should not incur the suspicion of being engaged in a conflict between their public and private duties. No one would say a word in disparagement of the Duke of Devonshire, but he should not be president of an Armaments Committee when he was chairman of a company which supplied arms to the navy. The Duke of Devonshire was chairman of the Barrow Hematite Company and a director of the Furness Railway Company. As to the Secretary of State for War, he would appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury, now that Army Administration was in such difficulty and danger, to ask him to retire from the Rock Life Assurance Company. The Secretary of

State for India was also a director. He was on the Board of the Pelican Life Insurance Company. It was the last of many directorships held by the noble Lord, a kind of "pelican in the wilderness." The President of the Board of Trade held nine directorships, but he resigned them when he was appointed. He maintained it was inconvenient that a gentleman who had held no fewer than nine directorships should be at the head of a department dealing with company matters, and in which he must always come into conflict with company interests. As to the Lord Advocate, he had three directorships, some extraordinary and some ordinary.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The hon. Member is wrong. I have no extraordinary directorships.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said that, as Public Prosecutor, the Lord Advocate would have to intervene in cases of fraud. How would he manage in a case of fraud against one of his own companies? Would a prosecution be inconvenient and unsuitable? Another Scotch Minister, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, had three directorships. The President of the Board of Agriculture had no directorships, and he thought he knew what that right hon. Gentleman's opinion was about Government directorships. The Postmaster General had no directorships, but he had directorships before he became a Minister of the Crown. On the 6th May, 1901, he asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies the following question†—

> "Whether he is aware that last September a proclamation was issued by the Governor of Johannesburg dealing with the conduct of banking business in that city, and containing the announcement that notes of the Bank of Africa would be accepted as cash at all the Government offices within the town and district of Johannesburg, and what is the reason for the conferring of this privilege on the Bank of Africa?"

The Secretary of State for War, who replied, said he had not seen the proclamation, but that inquiry would be made. He repeated the question a few months afterwards, and then tried the Financial Secretary to the War Office, who also said that inquiries would be made, but he had never heard anything further about it. When he asked that question he knew that the Postmaster-General was a director of the Bank of Africa with Mr. Rochefort Maguire, of the Rand. As to the minor Ministers, they had fifty-three directorships. One of them, the Chancellor of the Duchy, had no directorships. He was Whip for many years, and was a gentleman whom they all admired and respected; but although he held no directorships, he, as Whip of the Party opposite, was in some way or other associated with company promoting financiers. He kept the cheque for £30,000 that Mr. Hooley gave to the Conservative funds until the Government thought it would be inconvenient to cash it, and sent it back. It was always a rule of the House that Ministers should, as far as possible, be exempt from commercial and financial transactions. The Secretary to the Treasury was chairman of a company. Surely it was inconvenient that a Whip should have anything to do with such matters, having regard to the way in which committees on railway matters were constituted. Turning to the Junior Lords of the Treasury, the hon. Member for St.

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† See (4) *Debates*, xciii., 741.

Andrews was a director, but he was a kind of proselyte, having received the office since his appointment as a Minister of the Crown. The offer of a directorship to a Minister of the Crown was a very ugly thing for those who made it, to say nothing about those who accepted it. The hon. Member for Sevenoaks was a director of six companies; he only hoped that since his acceptance of office the number had been reduced as much as his majority. He was glad to be able to say of the Attorney General, who had just had a bad quarter-of-an-hour, that he was not a company director. But the Solicitor General was a director, which showed that the hon. and learned Gentleman had, in his exile in England, acquired the financial genius of the English people. The Treasurer of the Household was a director of the Barrow Hematite Iron and Steel Company, which provided munitions for ships of war.

MR. RANDLES (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said the company made only iron and steel rails.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said that would suit his case still better. Then there were eight Lords-in-Waiting, and five of them had as many as twenty-two directorships. Ten members of the Cabinet had fourteen directorships, half of which were of railway companies, though the Minister for Agriculture had said, in a recent speech, "Railway companies are managed by ornamental directors." He knew for a fact that a gentleman who had sat on the Treasury Bench was offered a directorship with £400 a year, and told he would not be required to go near the board, but

simply to give his name. He was a poor man, but honourable, and refused the offer. Guinea-pigging, which was a reproach to this House, but which, he believed, was much exaggerated, would cease to exist if they could only weed out directors from the Treasury Bench. The position of guinea-pigs in the House of Commons must be made intolerable, and he urged the House to purify the Treasury Bench by insisting that Ministers should consider the reward of the salary they received from the country as amply sufficient, without attaching their names to trading institutions. He begged to move. He concluded by moving his Amendment.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.) formally seconded.

Another Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'and we humbly represent to Your Majesty that thirty-three of the fifty-six Ministers of the Crown who constitute Your Majesty's Administration hold among them no fewer than sixty-eight directorships in public companies, and that we consider the position of a public company director to be incompatible with the position of a Minister of the Crown, and that the union of such offices is calculated to lower the dignity of public life.'"—(*Mr. MacNeill.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Debate arising.

And, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed Tomorrow.

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 20th February, 1903.

ROLL OF THE LORDS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had prepared and laid it on the Table. The same was ordered to be printed. (No. 4.)

TURKEY, No. 1 (1903).

Correspondence respecting the affairs of South Eastern Europe.

CHINA, No. 1 (1903).

Despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Peking forwarding a Report by Mr. W. J. Clennell, His Majesty's Consul at Kiukiang, respecting the Province of Kiangsi.

ARMY (MILITIA TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS).

Militia Training Return (1902); Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

SARDINIAN LOAN.

Annual Account for 1902; Final account.

GREEK LOAN.

Annual Account for 1902.

NATIONAL DEBT (SAVINGS BANKS AND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES).

Account of the gross amount of all sums received and paid by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt on account of banks for savings and friendly societies in Great Britain and Ireland, from their commencement at 6th August 1817, to 20th November 1902, inclusive.

Account of the several transactions which have taken place, during the year ended 20th November, 1902, in the investment of all moneys which came into the hands of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt for savings banks and friendly societies.

Account showing the aggregate amount of the liabilities of the Government to the trustees of savings banks and friendly societies respectively on 20th November, 1902, etc.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 20th February, 1903.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

ADJOURNMENT.

Resolved, that this House, at the rising of the House this day, do adjourn till Monday next.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*)

NEW WRIT.

For Dublin University, in the room of the Right Honble. William Edward Hartpole Lecky (Chiltern Hundreds).—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*)

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND).

Petitions for legislation: from Newburgh; Monimail; Abernethy; Kilindrach; Kilsyth; Hamilton; Jura; and, Largs; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS (SANITARY CONVENIENCES).

Petition from Manchester, for enforcement of the Home Office Order; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TURKEY (No. 1, 1903).

Copy presented, of correspondence respecting the affairs of South Eastern Europe [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CHINA (No. 1, 1903).

Copy presented, of despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Peking forwarding a Report by Mr. W. J. Clennell, His Majesty's Consul at Kinkiang, respecting the Province of Kiangsi [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES FUND, 1901-2.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 19th February—*Mr. Hayes Fisher*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 18.]

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND).

Return presented relative thereto [ordered 19th February—*Mr. Hayes Fisher*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 19.]

NATIONAL GALLERY (REPORT).

Return presented relative thereto [ordered 19th February—*Mr Hayes Fisher*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 20.]

GREEK LOAN OF 1898.

Account presented up to 31st December, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 21.]

SARDINIAN LOAN.

Account presented, of the Total Sums issued out of the Consolidated Fund and advanced to His Majesty the King of Sardinia, and of the Sums received to 31st December, 1902, for Interest and Sinking Fund thereof [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 22.]

NATIONAL DEBT (SAVINGS BANKS AND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES).

Annual Account presented, for the period ended 20th November, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 23.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS.)

Appropriation Accounts presented, for the year ending 31st March, 1902, together with the Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon, and certain Reports upon Store Accounts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 24.]

NAVY (MANŒUVRES).

Copy presented, of Narrative of the Combined Manœuvres by Mediterranean, Channel, and Cruiser Squadrons, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Scotch Education—Grant.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury what sum it is proposed to allot to Scotland as an equivalent for the increased grant to elementary education in England and Wales directed by the Education Act of last session; and what form this grant to Scotland is to take having regard to the fact that no Bill for dealing with Education in Scotland is announced in His Majesty's Gracious Speech as intended to be brought in during the present session.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) The amount of the grant is still under consideration between the Treasury and the Scotch Education Department, but will, I hope, be settled very soon. The method of allocation must depend upon the amount of the grant, and it is not yet possible to say whether it will involve any legislation.

Ireland—Delay in Erection of new Post Office at Belturbet.

MR. McGOVERN (Cavan, W.): To ask the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that the post office in Belturbet, county Cavan, was condemned over two years ago as being in an unsuitable position and incapable of affording proper accommodation to the public and officials employed there, and can he state the reasons why nothing has been done towards erecting a new post office as promised in March 1901, and when it is proposed to commence building on the site that has been secured.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) No funds have as yet been available for building the new post office at Belturbet: but it is proposed to make a beginning next financial year, if Parliament votes the necessary money.

Criminal Procedure Code in the Transvaal.

MR. TOULMIN (Lancashire, Bury): To ask the Postmaster General, as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether he will lay upon the

Table the Criminal Procedure Code, 1903, promulgated by Lord Milner in the Transvaal.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain for the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*) There will be no objection to lay the ordinance on the Table as soon as it is received from Lord Milner and considered by the Secretary of State.

Drainage and Improvement of Land Acts—Expenditure for 1902.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture what have been the amounts of the expenditure charged on estates in Great Britain for improvements under the Drainage and Improvement of Land Acts for the year 1902, in respect of farm buildings, labourers' cottages, and mansion houses respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Hanbury.*) The amounts charged in the year 1902 upon estates in Great Britain under the Drainage and Improvement of Land Acts (including the Limited Owner's Residences Acts) for the works to which the hon. Member refers, were as follows:—Farm Buildings, £54,438; Labourers' Cottages, £22,612; Mansion Houses and other Residences, £29,604.

Tuberculosis Commission—Publication of Report.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether he can state when the Report of the Commission on Tuberculosis will be issued.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I have no later information on the subject than that given in my reply to the hon. Member on the 17th December last.†

Coal Tax—Shipments during 1902.

MR. DAVID THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he can state the quantities of coal shipped quarterly during 1902 not exceeding 6s. per ton, exceeding 6s. but not exceeding 6s. 3d. per ton, exceeding 6s. 3d. but not exceeding 6s. 6d., exceeding 6s. 6d. but not exceeding 6s. 9d., exceeding 6s. 9d. but not exceeding 7s., and exceeding 7s. per ton.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) The quantities of coal not exceeding a value of 6s. the ton free on board shipped from the United Kingdom during each of the four quarters of 1902 were as follows:—1st Quarter, 509,652 tons; 2nd Quarter, 781,756 tons; 3rd Quarter, 951,639 tons; 4th Quarter, 1,033,386 tons; Total, 3,276,433 tons. No record is kept of the quantities at intermediate values between 6s. and 7s. the ton. The figures for shipments exceeding 6s. and not exceeding 7s. the ton in value, and those for shipments exceeding 7s. the ton, are being made up, but will not be completed for two or three days.

Income Tax.

MR. MORTON (Deptford): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether commercial firms, whose Income Tax returns have been independently certified by a professional accountant and auditor, are liable to be surcharged by the Income Tax Commissioners, or to send in their accounts to be examined.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) If the District Commissioners are not satisfied with the return rendered by any person for the purposes of assessment to Income Tax (whether certified by an independent accountant or not), they have power under Section 113 of the Income Tax Act of 1842 to make an assessment according to their own judgment subject to an appeal. On appeal the Commissioners are authorised by Section 120 of the same Act to require at their discretion any particulars or accounts which they may deem necessary.

Trade and Navigation Returns—Definition of Small Coal.

MR. DAVID THOMAS: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the new form of the monthly Trade and Navigation Returns, any definition of small coal has been laid down for the guidance of exporters in declaring the description of their shipments, or whether it is left to their discretion; and, in the latter case, will he consider the advisability of prescribing a maximum distance between the bars of the screen through which coal must pass in order to constitute small.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxvi., 1501.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The distinction now drawn in the official Trade Accounts between small, large, and "through and through" coal has been made experimentally to meet the wishes of exporters, and on the understanding that these descriptions are, generally speaking, well understood in the trade, although the precise definitions may vary somewhat in the different coalfields. These statistics are based, like all the export Returns, on the declarations of exporters, subject to check when necessary. It is not thought desirable to prescribe a hard and fast rule, at least until more experience has been gained.

Leicestershire County Council's Education Scheme—Objection by the Board of Education.

MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if he will state upon what grounds he based his objection to the education scheme originally submitted by the Leicestershire County Council in accordance with the requirements of the Education Act, 1902.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The County Council of Leicestershire has not as yet sent to the Board of Education a scheme for publication under Section 17 of the Education Act. A draft scheme framed by a Committee of the Council has been sent to the Board with a view to the informal discussion of its provisions. The Board does not yet know whether the suggestions made in the course of that discussion have been favourably considered by the County Council.

THE GRENADIER GUARDS—QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): Mr. Speaker, I beg to draw your attention to the circulation amongst Members this morning of a letter which has been published in *The Times* on the subject of a recent incident in the Grenadier Guards. It is an *ex parte* statement on a case pending and makes serious allegations against officers in high positions. In these circumstances, and seeing that those officers are not in a position to protect themselves and make a counter statement, I desire to ask you whether this proceeding is consistent with the privileges of Parliament.

MR. SPEAKER: I do not see what the suggestion of privilege is. There is no breach of privilege.

NEW BILLS.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE BILL.

"To amend the Church Discipline Act of 1840 and the Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874," presented by Mr. David MacIver; supported by Mr. Austin Taylor, Mr. Charles M'Arthur, Mr. Mellor, Mr. M. W. Ridley, Mr. Hoult, Sir Albert Rollit, and Mr. Brand; to be read a second time upon Friday 13th March, and to be printed. [Bill 1.]

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the rating of hereditaments containing machinery," presented by Mr. Chapman, supported by Sir Edward Strachey, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir John Dorington, Mr. Cawley, Sir William Tomlinson, Mr. Emmott, and Colonel Royds; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 2.]

LAND VALUES ASSESSMENT AND RATING BILL.

"To provide for the separate assessment and rating of Land Values," presented by Dr. Macnamara; supported by Mr. John Burns, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Charles Douglas, Mr. Emmott, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. Robson, Mr. Trevelyan, and Mr. Whitley; to be read a second time upon Friday, 27th March, and to be printed. [Bill 3.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING (LIGHTHOUSES) BILL.

"To amend the Law with regard to Lighthouses, and to abolish Light Dues," presented by Mr. Charles M'Arthur; supported by Mr. Evelyn Cecil, Colonel Denny, Sir Francis Evans, Mr. Field, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir John

Leng, Mr. Nicol, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Renwick, Sir Robert Ropner, and Mr. Charles Wilson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 4.]

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.

"To provide Compensation in certain cases of Non-Renewal of Licences to sell Intoxicating Liquors," presented by Mr. Butcher; supported by Mr. Galloway, Mr. Flower, and Mr. Groves; to be read a second time upon Friday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 5.]

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

"To amend the Law as to Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister," presented by Sir Gilbert Parker; supported by Mr. Rutherford, Sir Brampton Gurdon, Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, Mr Hambro, Mr. M. W. Ridley, Sir Joseph Leese, Mr. MacIver, Mr. Mellor, Mr. Melville, Mr. Charles Shaw, and Sir Barrington Simeon; to be read a second time upon Friday, 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 6.]

TRADE DISPUTES BILL.

"To legalise the peaceful conduct of Trade Disputes," presented by Mr. Shackleton; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Fenwick, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Jacoby, and Mr. Pickard; to be read a second time upon Friday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 7.]

INNKEEPERS' LIABILITY BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the Liability of Innkeepers," presented by Sir Brampton Gurdon; supported by Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Gretton, Mr. Bousfield, Mr. Levy, Mr. Seeley, and Sir John Brunner; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 8.]

RAILWAYS (PRIVATE SIDINGS) BILL.

"To explain and amend Section 76 of the Railways Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and to amend the Railway and Canal Traffic Acts, 1854 to 1888," presented by Sir John Brunner; to be read a second time upon Friday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 9.]

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

"To amend the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887," presented by Mr. Markham; supported by Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Pickard, Mr. William Abraham, Mr. Thomas Bayley, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Hatch, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Theodore Taylor, Mr. M'Kenna, and Mr. Herbert Lewis; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th May, and to be printed. [Bill 10.]

AGED PENSIONERS BILL.

"To provide Pensions for the aged deserving poor," presented by Mr Remnant; supported by Mr. Goulding, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Bull, Mr. Forde Ridley, and Mr Groves; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 11.]

CONSPIRACY LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Conspiracy Laws," presented by Mr. O'Dowd; supported by Mr. Cullinan, and Mr. Patrick O'Brien; to be read a second time upon Friday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 12.]

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

"To grant Certificates to Persons in Charge of Steam Engines and Boilers," presented by Mr. Fenwick; supported by Sir William Allan, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Pickard, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Levy, and Mr. Jacoby; to be read a second time upon Friday, 27th March, and to be printed. [Bill 13.]

HALL-MARKING OF FOREIGN PLATE BILL.

"To amend the Law with regard to the assaying of Gold and Silver Plate and Jewellery," presented by Mr. Samuel Roberts; supported by Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Sir Benjamin Stone, Sir Joseph Dimsdale, and Mr. Remnant; to be read a second time upon Friday 27th March, and to be printed. [Bill 14.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SATURDAYS (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors in Ireland on Saturdays; and for other purposes connected therewith," presented by Mr. Sloan; supported by Sir Thomas Esmonde, Colonel Saunderson, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, Mr. Flynn, Mr. T. L. Corbett, Dr. Thompson, Sir James Haslett, Mr. Hugh Law, and Mr. T. W. Russell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 15.]

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend The Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act, 1899," presented by Mr. Heywood Johnstone; supported by Mr. Haldane, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir Joseph Leese, Mr. Vicary Gibbs, Sir George Bartley, Mr. Leigh Bennett, Mr. Bond, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Dr. Farquharson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 16.]

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Labourers (Ireland) Acts," presented by Mr. Dillon; supported by Mr. William Redmond, Mr. O'Shee, Captain Donelan, Mr. Lundon, and Mr. Sheehan; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th May, and to be printed. [Bill 17.]

FOREIGN SHIPOWNERS' LIABILITY BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the liability of Foreign Shipowners for personal injuries," presented by Mr. Harry Samuel; supported by Mr. Buxton, Mr. Charles Wilson, Sir George Newnes, Mr. Flower, Sir Joseph Lawrence, Mr. Bell, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Morton, Major Evans-Gordon, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Mr. Harold Reckitt; to be read a second time upon Friday 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 18.]

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To extend the powers of the Local Government Board for Scotland in regard to the Detention of Poor Persons in poorhouses and parish hospitals," presented by Mr. Baird; supported by Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Andrew Agnew, and Mr. Hunter Craig; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th May, and to be printed. [Bill 19.]

TOWN TENANTS (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Town Tenants in Ireland," presented by Mr. Kendal O'Brien; supported by Mr. Field, Mr. Lundon, Mr. Cullinan, and Mr. Condon; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 20.]

ROMAN CATHOLICS' DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.

"To provide for the removal of certain disabilities affecting Roman Catholics in Great Britain and Ireland," presented by Dr. Robert Ambrose; supported by Mr. Clancy, Mr. Dillon, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. William Abraham (Cork), Captain Donelan, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, Mr. William O'Brien, and Mr. Reddy; to be read a second time upon Friday, 12th June, and to be printed. [Bill 21.]

JURY ACTS (IRELAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Jury Acts (Ireland)," presented by Mr. O'Mara; supported by Mr. Dillon, Captain Donelan, Mr. Hugh Law, Mr. MacVeagh, and Mr. Roche; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 22.]

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend the Education (Scotland) Acts," presented by Mr. Parker Smith; supported by Mr. Baird, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Charles Douglas, Sir John Leng, and Sir John Stirling-Maxwell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 23.]

LIGHT LOCOMOTIVES (IRELAND) BILL.

"To provide for the authorisation of races with Light Locomotives in Ireland," presented by Mr. Scott Montagu; supported by Mr. Arthur Stanley, Mr. Rose, Colonel Saunderson, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, Mr. Delany, and Mr. Minch; to be read a second time on Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 24.]

PISTOLS BILL.

"To regulate the sale and use of Pistols or other Firearms," presented by Mr. Helme; supported by Mr. M. W. Ridley, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, and Mr.

Stuart-Wortley; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 2nd April, and to be printed. [Bill 25.]

LICENSING (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors in Ireland," presented by Mr. Hugh Law; supported by Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Wood, Mr. O'Mara, Sir James Haslett, Mr. Jordan, and Mr. T. L. Corbett; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 26.]

DRUNKENNESS AND REGISTRATION OF CLUBS (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Drunkenness and the Registration of Clubs in Ireland," presented by Mr. T. W. Russell; supported by Mr. Jordan, Mr. T. L. Corbett, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. John Gordon, Mr. M'Govern, and Sir Thomas Esmonde; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 27.]

SHOPS BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Shops," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. John Burns, Mr. Flower, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. Kemp, Mr. M'Crae, Mr. Melville, Mr. Nannetti, Sir Barrington Simeon, and Mr. Tennant; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 28.]

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

"To establish a single Franchise at all elections and thereby to abolish University representation, and to Remove the Disabilities of Women," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Logan, Dr. Macnamara, Captain Norton, and Mr. Shackleton; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 29.]

WAGES BOARDS BILL.

"To provide for the establishment of Wages Boards," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. John Burns, Mr. M'Kenna, Mr. Tennant, and Mr. Trevelyan; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 30.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To give the ratepayers a direct Veto on the Liquor Traffic in their respective areas in Scotland," presented by Mr. Hunter Craig; supported by Mr. Crombie, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Black, Sir William Dunn, Mr. Eugene Wason, Dr. Robert Wallace, Mr. John D. Hope, and Dr. Farquharson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 31.]

OUT-DOOR RELIEF (FRIENDLY SOCIETIES) BILL.

"To amend The Out-door Relief (Friendly Societies) Act, 1894," presented by Sir Edward Strachey; supported by Sir Samuel Hoare, Sir William Holland, Mr. Goulding, Mr. Brand, Sir Albert Rollit, Sir Harry Bullard, Mr. Warner, Mr. Thomas Bayley, Mr. Yoxall, Mr. Rigg, and Mr. Harry Samuel; to be read a second time upon Friday next, and to be printed. [Bill 32.]

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

"To extend the Jurisdiction of the County Courts," presented by Sir Albert Rollit; supported by Sir Henry Fowler; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 33.]

SOLICITORS BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Solicitors," presented by Sir Albert Rollit; supported by Sir Henry Fowler; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 34.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

"To prohibit the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday," presented by Mr. Perks; supported by Mr. Charles Wilson, Mr. Crawford Smith, Mr. Compton Rickett, Mr. Randles, Mr. Fenwick, Sir Joseph Firbank, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Hain, and Mr. Pickard; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 35.]

OLD AGE PENSIONS BILL.

"To provide Pensions for persons over sixty-five years of age," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr. Burt, Mr. John Burns, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Sir Walter Foster, and Mr.

Broadhurst; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 36.]

CORONERS' INQUESTS (RAILWAY FATALITIES) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Coroners' Inquests in the case of Fatal Accidents on Railways," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. John Burns, and Mr. Schwann; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 37.]

VACCINATION PROSECUTIONS BILL.

"To provide that no Prosecution under the Vaccination Acts shall be commenced without the authority of the Guardians," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Sir John Rolleston, Mr. Goddard, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Brigg, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Corrie Grant, and Mr. Bell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 38.]

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [19th February] to Main Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign*,

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Which Amendment was, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

> "And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that thirty-three of the fifty-six Ministers of the Crown who constitute Your Majesty's Administration hold among them no fewer than sixty-eight directorships in public companies, and that we consider the position of a public company director to be incompatible with the position of a Minister of the Crown, and that the union of such offices is calculated to lower the dignity of public life."—(*Mr. MacNeill.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said that in dealing with the important matter raised by the Amendment he would speak temperately. In his opinion the House ought to look at this matter from a lofty standpoint. Hon. Members were sent there to protect the weak rather than to increase the power of the influential. He was rather surprised last night at the levity with which some hon. Members appeared to regard the subject. They did not seem to realise that the honour and dignity of the House in the matter of legislative impartiality were to a certain extent involved. The question, in his opinion, involved the fundamental principle of equity, because this House was recognised as a judicial authority from which all legislation emanated. They were charged with the duty of making impartial laws in the interest of public utility. He submitted that if legislators, and especially if they sat on the Front Ministerial Bench, had private interests in connection with the subjects which were brought under the consideration of the House, it was only natural that they should have biassed minds. He would give an example from the past. It was in a Parliament composed of landlords that the Land Laws were made, and it was seen from the Statute-book that the measures which were passed were framed for their profit, and to protect them in their privileges. We lived now in a commercial age when limited liability companies existed in unlimited numbers. He held that it was quite possible, in connection with measures which tended to public utility, such as those promoted by railway companies, shipping companies, gas companies, electric companies, and water companies, a policy might be followed which was opposed to the general interests of the community. He held that right hon. and hon. Members should not be permitted to remain or to become directors in a concern which was a State protected monopoly. That was a very plain proposition which would commend itself to the common sense of everybody. They were all elected as the custodians of public and not of private interests.

He should like to know whether any Member of that House would try to defend the present system, and appeal for the support of his constituency as the director of a railway, shipping, or water company. He admitted that hon. Members were directors before they became Ministers, but those positions should be relinquished, because their full time should be given to the performance of their public duties. In the course of his Parliamentary career he had had many opportunities of assisting at deputations on very important matters, and it was almost invariably urged by Ministers that pressure of time would not enable them to go fully into the subjects. The result was that the deputations were generally dismissed without receiving that consideration to which they were entitled in regard to matters of immediate public interest. It was quite evident, from the experience of hon. Members in commercial matters, that Ministers had more than sufficient to do to fulfil their public duties without attending to pressing private affairs. But in addition to those public utility companies, there was another class of companies which might be termed dangerous—for instance, Stock Exchange Syndicates. They all knew what a rush there was on these during the war. There were also companies which constructed war vessels and contracted for armaments and war material. Directorships on such companies should not, in his opinion, be held by any hon. Member of this House, and that opinion was more emphatic in regard to right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench. He was sorry to see that Ministers were not in their places, for this was a matter in which they were directly concerned, and they ought to attend a debate in which their conduct was being discussed. His was a view which had been put forward by many high-minded English statesmen in the past. In the case of Ministers especially, private interest should not clash with public duty. It would be advisable if the House should not allow this occasion of temptation to continue in perpetuity as a possible cause of friction between this House and the people.

Some hon. Members might think that no temptation existed. Let him give an instance. Since he became a Member of Parliament he had had more than one offer of the necessary amount of shares in a company to qualify him for a directorship. He was to receive a modest salary, and need not attend the meetings of the directors. If this form of temptation was put forward to private Members, what temptation, amounting to thousands of pounds, might be offered to a Minister who wielded a power in Society and in the State? Therefore, he held that it ought to be the duty of the First Lord of the Treasury to consider this matter seriously and take away that temptation from his colleagues. They all knew—those at least conversant with public affairs—the revelations which took place in regard to the Panama Canal; and they were also aware of the allegations of American lobbying and the manner in which legislation was there carried on. They likewise knew that the system of American lobbying had been transferred to a large extent to Westminster. He held that under these circumstances a condition of public affairs existed which ought not to be permitted to continue. He was certain that any Member of this House would deplore the adoption of the methods pursued in other countries; and he held that prevention was better than cure. He did not intend to make any personal attack on any hon. or right hon. Member of this House. He put his argument in a temperate manner and entirely from the point of view that they in this House were public men, there in the interest of the public, and not as private individuals doing private work which should not belong to a public position. He submitted, therefore, that the practice of directorships being held by right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench and their subordinates, or even by hon. Members of the House, should be discontinued unless in the case of purely commercial competitive concerns. With regard to directorships in companies dealing with public utilities which were State protected monopolies—these should be held by no Member of the House. He wished the House to note the distinction he made. Now this was a perfectly plain businesslike proposition that would bear examination and could be discussed without heat or loss of temper.

He would give a notable instance of what had occurred in the House. It was said that there were seventy railway directors in this House, and fifty in the House of Lords. Now, when a Railway Bill came before the House, the directors always voted solid for it, no matter what side of the House they belonged to, unless where the interests of one railway company clashed with another. With respect to the London and North Western Railway Company's Bill alluded to the previous night by his hon. friend who introduced the Amendment, that Bill was only under discussion for three hours—that was before the new Rules were passed—when a director of that company actually stood up and moved the Closure, which Mr. Speaker accepted. He did not know whether Mr. Speaker was aware of the fact that that hon. Member was a director of the company under discussion. At any rate that was a position which ought not to be taken by any Member who was a director. He maintained that a director should not have the power to stand up and move the Closure in the discussion of a matter of public interest. If such a method of conducting debates on transit affairs were continued, it might menace the welfare of the community, and impede the commercial progress of the nation. That fact was beginning to be recognised by the non-official Members of the House, and to be accepted by the Press and the people outside. Public opinion should be the breath of the law, and public opinion said that some change in this direction was necessary.

He would suggest to the Prime Minister, whom they all respected, although they might differ from him on many matters, as the trusted guardian and custodian of the rights and privileges of this House, that he should take some measures quietly, but effectively, to put an end to the continuance of this objectionable system. He was aware of the fact that the Prime Minister had shown a good example by not being a director of any company. He granted that it was not reasonable to expect that the right hon. Gentleman should, at the close of this debate, abandon his colleagues in office. No; the right hon. Gentleman was the chosen Leader of a great Party, and he would be, as he ought to be, loyal to his official colleagues. But they were in an age in which precedent did not sanctify an abuse. He knew there were difficulties in the way, but the right hon. Gentleman could surmount them. He was aware that heroic remedies or drastic measures were not popular, nor perhaps probable, in the House as at present constituted. They lived in an age of expediency, and when a large question came before the House and was discussed at length and promises given, nothing more was done. However, he trusted that the annual recurrence of this Amendment would impress itself on the minds of those who were responsible for carrying on the business of the House and country. His conviction was that the people outside the House, and many Members inside, were determined that the present state of things should not continue. No worthy effort had ever been attempted without sacrifice, and he hoped the Prime Minister would, at the close of the debate, give some satisfactory assurance that the present system was about to be ended.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said that it was unfortunate that this question was raised on the Address, because they could not vote on it since it would be taken as a vote of want of confidence in the Government. In regard to directorships being held by Ministers, it seemed to him to be unfortunate that the rule observed by the late Earl of Beaconsfield and Mr. Gladstone had not continued to be enforced. No one doubted the honour of any member of the Government, or any Member on either side of the House, but it seemed to him that it would be wise if those in charge of the affairs of this enormous Empire should devote the whole of their time to the discharge of their official duties, and not be mixed up with public companies. The real point appeared to him to be that they had a great country to manage, and that as the position of a Minister of the Crown was one of great honour it would be wiser—he would not impute any improper motives whatever, that would be a mistake—not to pass a law, but that the moral feeling and general idea should be that a Minister on taking office should relinquish any directorships he might hold. He regretted the discussion, as it seemed to him to lower the great position of Ministers of the Crown. Further, when they considered the onerous duties which attached to high offices in the Government, it was not reasonable to suppose that men could attend to their public duties as well as to their duties as directors. They could not serve two masters.

properly, and it seemed to him much wiser that they should relinquish one position or the other.

The experience of the last few years showed that occasions might arise which would give the public an opportunity of saying things which it was not desirable should be said of Ministers of the Crown. Their responsibilities and duties might not come into conflict with their private interests, but the man in the street thought they did, and that tended to lower the dignity of a Minister of the Crown. He should however be sorry to see a law passed with reference to the matter. He acknowledged that there were directorships and directorships. Some, no doubt, were above suspicion; still, he thought it would be wiser if there was a sort of general understanding that, without it being made obligatory, it should be the general idea — the correct thing—that when a man took office he should resign duties which did not appear to be quite compatible with his duties as a Minister. That was his view, and he believed that many members of the Government held it also. Having regard to the enormous growth of the country and to the development of trade, it was better that those who had the guidance of the State should not be mixed up with large commercial transactions, which were often associated with the expansion of the Empire. He should be glad to see the rule to which he had referred recognised, but, of course, on the present occasion he could not possibly vote for the Amendment.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he agreed with the hon. Gentleman in regretting that such discussions should occur, but there was a simple remedy, and that was that the Government should adopt what was really the substantial view on both sides of the House. He regretted also that the matter had to be raised on the debate on the Address, as he should have liked to have had an open vote on it. But it was difficult to raise it in any other way. It could not be raised on the salary of an individual Minister; and, even if it could, that would be still more invidious than raising it as a general principle. He did not think right hon. Gentlemen opposite could complain of the tone and temper with which the debate had been conducted. There was no desire to reflect on the present Government, and his hon. friend who moved the Amendment, though he had to give instances to prove his case, made no personal attack on any member of the Government. In no sense was it a Party question, but he did not think that any previous Government had carried the matter to such an extent as the present Government. The fact that thirty-three members of the Government held sixty-eight directorships seemed to him to be a very serious matter, and one which it was the duty of the House to consider as a matter of principle. The right hon. Gentleman, in discussing the subject a few years ago, seemed to think that it was not only an attack on the Government, but a sort of general depreciation of directorships as such.

They might rightly assume that all the directorships held by the Government were legitimate, but that was not the question. The question was whether a directorship put the member of the Government who held it in a false position. The instance which his hon. friend gave yesterday, of the way in which directorships held by Ministers might be used, was one of the strongest arguments he had ever heard in favour of the Motion. He need hardly say he made no reflection on the Secretary of State for War, but it appeared that in an advertisement of the insurance company, of which the right hon. Gentleman was a director, his name was put at the head of the list of directors, and was printed in large characters. That was done without the right hon. Gentleman's knowledge, and he immediately stopped it when it was brought to his attention. The company was a very respectable company, but was it not quite certain that if the secretary to the company did so, the agents of the company would also draw special attention to the fact that the Secretary of State for War was one of the directors of the company? It seemed to him that members of the Government who were also directors were in a serious dilemma. He assumed they were directors because they intended to give attention to the affairs of their companies, but if they did that they were bound, in the present pressure of business, to neglect their public duties. The work of the principal offices of State was enough, and more than enough, to occupy any man's full attention. If a Minister was a director he would either neglect his public duties or the interests of his shareholders and be a mere guinea-pig director.

A year or two ago it was said that private interests would in such circumstances always give way. He was sure they would, but it was not a case of a mere shareholder. A director's interests were not private interests. He was acting as trustee for the shareholders, and he was put in a false position when his duty to his country and his duty to his shareholders conflicted, as they were almost bound to do in the existing state of things. The right hon. Gentleman himself had practically admitted the validity of the arguments they had advanced. A year or two ago he said that his colleagues, instead of holding sixty directorships as at one time, held then only forty-one, and he pointed out that it was an advantage that the number of directorships held by Ministers had been reduced by one third. But that forty-one had now increased to sixty-eight, and the right hon. Gentleman's point fell to the ground. Yesterday his hon. friend said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer held two directorships. The right hon. Gentleman shook his head and said he did not; and he himself was very glad that the right hon. Gentleman had given them up. His point was that they could not discriminate between company and company, and directorship and directorship. If it were left to the discretion of individual members of the Government as to the directorships they should or should not hold he had no doubt that a proper discretion would be exercised. But they had no guarantee of that; and it seemed to him it was not possible that the Prime Minister should say to a particular colleague: "You are entitled to hold this directorship, but you should give that one up." No one could tell in which way the interests of a company of which a Minister was a director would come into conflict with that Minister's public duties.

Mr. Sydney Buxton.

The only rule was the rule which was applied to the Civil Service, and to the Army and Navy, and that was that while a man was serving his country he should not hold a directorship of any sort or kind, on the ground that in the first place it would occupy his time, and on the much more important ground that a conflict of interests might arise. There was one rule, and one rule only, and that was that directorships should not be held by members of the Government.

The case put by his hon. friend yesterday seemed to him very much to the point, namely, that when any Member of this House took an office under Government he had to give up any directorships which he held. The late Secretary to the Admiralty held a directorship, but when he accepted an appointment under Government he had to give it up. What was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander. They knew the case was stronger in the Civil Service. The argument with regard to the Civil Service was a very strong one. Our standard for the Civil Service was far and away the best in the world, and that was largely due, in his opinion, to the fact that as public servants they were not allowed to have any private interests which might conflict with their public duties. That was the standard we should apply to Members of this House as well as the Civil Service. By the Rules of the House no hon. Member of this House was allowed to accept a contract from a Government Department. He regretted that this rule, which was adopted in days gone by, should be of so little use now, owing to the fact that private concerns were now to a large extent turned into limited companies, and thus hon. Members became interested, either directly or indirectly, in Government contracts. These limited companies had been put in the positions of the private concerns, and if it were wrong that any Member of the House should accept contracts from the Government it was equally wrong that members of the Government should be in a position to receive them as directors of limited companies, and so become, directly or indirectly, interested in them. He agreed that if the rule was carried out it might be hard on some Members who were asked to accept office, but, after all, when they came to that House they had to make sacrifices and they should accept the situation loyally.

In regard to the sacrifices they had to make upon taking office he reminded the House that the hon. Member who put forward the Motion had said that the members of the Cabinet divided between them in salaries £93,000 a year, and in that case his argument was still stronger, because one could not say that members of the Cabinet, at all events, were so badly treated by the country that they ought to fall back on the emoluments of directorships. What did such a statement mean? Some members of the Government had been in office for eight years and had received in public money between £600,000 and £700,000, so when they talked of a poor man taking office that was not a factor that ought to be considered in the matter. The fact was that while hon. Members were in the wilderness they were grateful for any manna which might come down to them, but when they accepted office, received the emoluments and divided the spoils of office, they ought to relinquish all other interests which might clash and conflict with their public interests. He heartily supported the Motion.

MR. PURVIS (Peterborough) said he had never held a directorship, and had never in his wildest dreams imagined himself a member of the Government. He submitted that the question really was whether the House of Commons, the mirror of the people of this country, was ashamed of men actively connected with business affairs. That was the way in which the matter presented itself to him. Was the Government to be composed of mere doctrinaires and pedants who had no practical knowledge of anything actually going on? Was every member of the Government to be a mere academic debater? Was the House of Commons, the representative House of the people of such a country as this, to be engaged merely in talking of things they did not understand, or things which they understood merely from hearsay? They all knew, as was once said by a great debater in this House, that commerce was in England the master feather in the eagle's wing. It seemed to him that this Motion proposed that the Government of the British Empire should entirely consist of bookworms, and that the disqualification for office in the Government should be that the Member who it was proposed should fill it should still continue to know what he had to do. One of the hon. Members for Durham had said that all directors voted solid. Of course they did, and the same might be said of any body of men who had a community of interests. Why should they not? He thought this Motion was far from consistent with the public traditions of the greatest commercial country of the world.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I do not think this case ought to be disposed of in the way in which it has been stated by the hon. Member who has just sat down. This is a very serious matter, and has been so regarded by the Government. The hon. Member who has just spoken said it was a very good thing that the members of the Government should be occupied with other things than the Government of the country, but I cannot accept that proposition. I think that men who occupy official positions of great responsibility should devote themselves exclusively to that work and to no other, and that is a proposition to which, in my opinion, there ought to be no exception whatsoever. You do not allow it, as my hon. friend has just now said, in your Civil Service. You do not permit for a moment any one of the subordinates of the Government to appear as directors of companies. Then why in the world should you not apply that principle to the heads of the Government. What is far more important is the notion that a man, the head of a Department of the Government, may be held out as an inducement to the investors of this country. That is a shocking thing to my mind. I have never been a director of a company in my life, and never shall be, but what is the fact? The fact is that the appearance of these names in the prospectus is to give the company a credit which it is not entitled to possess. The notion is that when a man is put forward as a director of any of these companies, he should be occupied with looking after the business of the company, and that should not be the case with responsible Ministers of the Crown. Therefore, it is not necessary, in my opinion, to argue a question of the kind. We know perfectly well of the extremely painful case of a colleague of my own who, being a director of a company, was, through no fault of his own, placed in such a position that he felt bound to resign his position in the Government. No Minister should be placed in such a position—a position in which he is nominally responsible—as to oblige him to resign his office.

This is an argument with reference to limited liability companies which, in my opinion, is unanswerable. A Minister of the Crown should run no risk of his character being compromised in this way, and I shall heartily vote for the Motion, unless the head of the Government will give us an assurance that the system will be put an end to, when it will not be necessary to divide upon the question or to record our opinions in regard to it. I know there are objections felt to raising a question of this kind on the debate on the Address, because it may appear to be directed against the Government, but it is quite within their power to prevent such a debate being raised in the future. The Prime Minister has only to give us an undertaking that measures shall be taken to meet the views put forward by those who have supported this Motion. There is no reason why such an undertaking should not be given. The Government have already promised two Bills in consequence of discussions which have taken place on Amendments to the Address, and it is perfectly open to the right hon. Gentleman to give the assurance that we now ask for, that this system shall be put an end to at once, without exception, and that directorships shall not be held by Ministers of the Crown.

I took a part myself in laying down and carrying out the principle that the Law Officers of the Crown should not engage in private business, because it was held that they had quite enough public business to do, and that it was possible that in undertaking private business they might have to deal with matters which came into conflict with their responsibilities to the Government and to the country. Well, that system has been put an end to, and is it for the Government to come forward now and say that these highly paid offices do not furnish enough work for the whole of their time and attention? I venture to assert that it is impossible for any member of the Government to entertain or to put forward such a defence as that. The hon. Member for Peterborough said it was better that people should have some experience in business. May I remind him that there is a period of opposition in which a man can do that; he does not become a Cabinet Minister as soon as he leaves school, and he has ample opportunity to get an insight into business affairs if he chooses. But when a man takes a responsible position such as that of a Minister of the Crown, I say it is only common sense to lay down the rule that he shall give up the whole of his time to the responsibilities of that position. This seems to me to be a proposition which can be unanimously accepted, and, therefore, I hope that the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, accepting and realising his responsibility in this matter, will give us an assurance that this system, or rather this practice, shall be put an end to unconditionally.

Sir WILLIAM TOMLINSON (Preston) deprecated the application of a hard and fast rule in matters of this kind. He did not suppose that there would be a large majority of the House in favour of saying that a person holding a high position under the Crown ought to be able to devote himself to a business that would take up a large portion of his time. But he did think hardly any one would maintain that no Minister of the Crown ought to be possessed of means other than emoluments belonging to his office. They must not forget that the tendency of the day was to convert property of various kinds into limited liability companies. Sometimes large estates, for the convenience of management, had been turned into companies, but because a man held a position in them it ought not to be any great disqualification to his holding high office under the Crown. There was a great difference between one kind of company and another, and it would be very unjust to say that a Minister ought necessarily to be disqualified from continuing to occupy a position he had occupied in the past.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): This is not the first time on which I have had to give my views, and the views of my colleagues, upon this question. I have argued it at length upon many previous occasions. I have also heard on many previous occasions the arguments which have been advanced on the opposite side, and I can only say that I do not see my way to change the opinions which prior to this I have laid before the House. I have no desire to complain of the tone in which this debate has been carried on, although it is true that the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment is sometimes misled by the rapid and tumultuous flow of his own eloquence into making something in the nature of a personal attack upon members of the Government.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): You did not hear my speech.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Oh, yes; you do me a great injustice. I may have been called out on business here and there, but I can assure the hon. Member I have the trend of his discourse clearly in my mind; so much so, that I did not require to refresh my memory by reading the reports which appeared in the newspapers this morning. I remember that the hon. Member chose for attack, of all members of the present Government, the Lord President of the Council, and asserted that he was a director of the Barrow Railway, the Barrow Hematite Iron Works, and of the Furness Railway. He went on to say that one of these companies produced armaments, and also to suggest that a Member of the Government who was also a Member of the Armaments Committee, ought not to be at the same time chairman of a company which produced armaments. Had any of the facts stated by the hon. Gentleman been true, I think the House would have felt that even then the Duke of Devonshire might well have been left out of account in a discussion of this kind; but as a matter of fact, all the hon. Gentleman's facts are untrue. The Committee is not an Armaments Committee. I presume the hon. Gentleman was alluding to the Defence Committee of the Cabinet. Well, that Defence Committee has to discuss very important questions, but it has not to discuss the particular nature of the guns and rifles which are to be used by our troops or by our fleets in the event of war. It is not, therefore, an Armaments Committee at all. The second error into which he fell was the assumption that the Duke was the chairman of a company which made armaments. Well, he is not, so far as I know, the Chairman, or even a director, therefore, the hon. Member is entirely incorrect. I do not believe that the Duke of Devonshire has anything whatever to do with the company to which the hon. Gentleman refers. I believe that some years ago he had, but so far as my information now goes—I have not been able to verify the fact—he is now no longer connected with it.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will permit me to correct him. The right hon. Gentleman refused to give me a list of Ministers and their directorates, and the only means which I, therefore, had was this book, the "Directory of Directors," which I regard as the bible of the Ministry, and in that I find that the Duke of Devonshire, K.G., is described as Chairman of the Barrow Hematite Steel Company, Ltd.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is a company with which I believe, though I am not sure, the Duke of Devonshire was connected, which did make armaments, but he has not been connected with it for many years. I only mention this because it is really too bad to drag in the Duke of Devonshire, or if he be dragged in it should be with some accurate knowledge of the facts. I will pass to what is much more important than the case of any particular Minister—the general principle which, in my judgment, ought to guide the House in coming to a conclusion on this matter. There are only two possible objections that I am able to see to a Minister holding a directorship; one, that it is likely to take up too much of the time which ought to be devoted to the public service, and the other that the mere fact that he is a director may bring him, in that capacity, into collision with some public interest which he ought to safeguard, or, being connected with a company, he may, if that company and its directors become involved in difficulties, through those difficulties bring, I will not say, discredit, but may embarrass his position in the Government and the position of the Government as a whole. Those are two arguments which are urged in favour of the absolute general rule that no member of any Government should ever hold any directorship.

Everybody must admit that no man has a right to join a Government unless he is prepared to give the best of his time to the work, or, indeed, to give all the time which the duties of the office require. But does that mean that a member of a Government is never to transact any kind of business of his own? For generations many of the most distinguished, honoured, and trusted members of the Government of this country have been men born to responsibilities which could not possibly be discharged without some expenditure of time, whether in or out of office. Are they to hand over their property to somebody else? Are they to abandon all interest in it? Are they to neglect the responsibilities which the possession of a great property involves? If not, you are driven to the conclusion that it is not inconsistent with the duties of a Minister of the Crown to devote, at all events, some part of his time to his own affairs, or affairs other than those of his office. Nobody can deny that general proposition, it is all a question of degree. A Minister is bound to see that his energies, strength, and health, are given to the service of his country, and that the duties of his office have the first call on all he has to give; but I have never heard the rule laid down, and no such rule can be laid down, or if it were it could not be enforced, that a member of a Government should have nothing to do with any business except that immediately connected with his office. I do not think it will be asserted that any one of the Gentlemen who now occupy the Treasury Bench has done other than devote the very best of his energies to the public service. Hon. Gentlemen may disagree with them; they may think them not worthy of the high places to which they have been called; but I am convinced that no man with the smallest acquaintance with the facts will for a moment suggest that they have not laboured hard, at all events, if not effectually, in the service of their country.

I therefore pass to what I think influences hon. Gentlemen in their approval of this Motion much more than the question of the amount of a Minister's time that directorships are likely to take up, viz., the argument drawn from undue influence or improper motive — I will not say corruption — or from the fact that a Minister, through no action of his own, may become involved in transactions which he and his colleagues will have every reason to regret. I want very much to know how the mover of this Motion distinguishes the case of a director of a public company from that of a member of a private firm? There are certain legal and technical distinctions between a limited liability company and one of unlimited liability. Is it on those legal distinctions that the whole principle of this Amendment is based? If so, surely it is the flimsiest thing in the world. The hon. Gentleman must base his case on something very different from that. The first question I ask him, therefore, is — Does he think there is a valid distinction between a private and a public company? If he comes to the conclusion, as he must, that the principle if applied to public companies must be extended to private companies, is he prepared to say that no man in business is to take part in the government of the country?

I heard last night a most excellent speech—though I did not agree with it — from the hon. Member for the St. Austell Division of Cornwall, who, in supporting an Amendment having reference to some very scandalous frauds in the City, avowedly spoke as what I may call the exponent of commercial morality in the City of London. I notice that the hon. Gentleman is a member of a firm—I have no doubt a most excellent and honourable firm—in the City. When the Party opposite come to this side of the House, is a man like that to be excluded from office because he belongs to a business firm in the City of London? ["No."] Why not? Does a private business take up no time? Do private businesses not get into difficulties? Are members of private firms never involved in unfortunate commercial enterprises? The proposition is really an untenable one. Unless you are going to lay down that a country, which is, above all, a business country, is to permit every class of man except the business class to compete for the regulation of its affairs, I do not see how the Amendment before the House can be supported.

The hon. Member for the St. Patrick Division of Dublin seemed to limit his objection to what he called "publicly regulated monopolies," by which he really meant, broadly speaking, railway companies. His view was that no member of a Government ought to be a director of a railway company because railway affairs often come before Parliament, and the position of such a Minister as a director might collide with his duties as a member of the Cabinet or of the Government. I am far from denying that the relation which this House bears to all these great corporations presents some difficulties, but the principle which the hon. Gentleman lays down, if adopted at all, must be extended—and I believe he was prepared to extend it—to all Members of this House and of the House of Lords. If you are going to lay down the proposition that no Minister is to give a vote in this House, or take any part in legislation or administration, who is connected with one of the great railway companies, it would be absurd to stop at the Treasury Bench; you must go to the Front Opposition Bench and to the general body of Members. One is in the habit of talking as though the only persons of administrative responsibility in the country were the gentlemen actually holding office at a given moment. We know that that is not the fact. Next in importance to the Ministry for the time being comes the ex-Ministry, who exert an enormous influence on the course of legislation, both in this House and in the other. But will anybody venture to say that Lord Rosebery, for instance, was to blame when the other day he joined the Board of the Great Northern Railway Company? Is he by that action to be precluded from giving his opinion, either in the House of Lords or elsewhere, upon great questions of public policy in which, directly or indirectly, the railway interest may be involved? The only result of this principle, if driven to its logical conclusion, will be to make public life, not purer, but poorer, by drawing out of it some of the best men now engaged therein. I am, of course, ready to admit that no Minister ought to hold a directorship, or to take an interest in the affairs of any company with which he may have to deal administratively. All will agree that for the President of the Board of Trade, for example, to be a director of a railway company would be most improper.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Or the Prime Minister?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know of any Prime Minister who was connected with a railway company. There may be such, but I should not like to dogmatise. ["Rosebery."] Oh! this introduces interesting and personal elements upon which, fortunately, it is unnecessary to dwell.

I come now to the broad consideration which I think ought to influence the House, even if the arguments I have already adduced are ineffectual. An hon. Gentleman opposite said the members of the present Government would have no reason to complain if they were forbidden to hold directorships because they had had the fortune, good or evil—I really do not know which—to be in office for a large number of years, and, during that period they had drawn their official salaries as members of the Government. Yes, a great many of my colleagues have been in office for a number of years; but, looking at the constitution of this country, and to the forces which determine the fate of the Government at any moment, can you count, in the future, on long tenure of office by any particular set of Ministers? Judging the future by the past, how can you say that this is likely to be the ordinary rule. I remember the first Government I was in—the Government of 1885—which lasted, I think, about eight months—I am not sure that it lasted quite so long. The next Government, for anything I know, may have a life as brief and interesting as the

Government of 1885. The Minister who has to select his colleagues, if this rule be laid down, will be absolutely obliged to say to this or that gentleman who may be eminently qualified to serve his country, "I ask you to take office under me. I think you will be eminently suited to manage this or that particular Department." The reply will probably be, "How long is the Government going to last? Is it to be a matter of six months or six years?" Probably a Minister will be forthcoming who will say, "The signs of the times are doubtful; the majority at my back is not large, and I can certainly hold out no prospect that this Government will be anything more than a temporary or passing arrangement." The gentleman will probably reply, "How can you ask me to give up my business work, on which I largely depend, for a tenure of office which, by your own confession, may last no longer than three months."

I am not arguing that this rule affects the men who do take office, because there are many who make great personal sacrifices in order to take up office. My point is that it is injurious to the country, and that it limits the choice of the Minister of the day. [Laughter.] Hon. Gentlemen opposite laugh, but there may be moments when every Minister called upon to form a Cabinet may find some difficulty in selecting a colleague. I know there are always at least ten gentlemen qualified, in their own opinion, to fill the place. But whether that be so or not, no one will deny the general truth of my contention. It is not an easy matter to form a Cabinet. It is not at all an easy business, and every artificial difficulty you put in the way is an injury not to the Party, not to the individual, not to the Minister, but it is an injury to the country; it is an injury which you ought not to inflict by laying down any hard and fast rule of this kind, which would be absolutely illogical and absurd unless you extend it from public companies to all kinds of business. I am aware that there is supposed to be something disgraceful in being the manager and director of a public company.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: No, no!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think I am in the least misrepresenting the tone of the comments made by the hon. Gentleman who moved this Amendment. He talks of it being discreditable to a Minister to hold one directorship, he says he is still more guilty if he holds more, and if he holds three or four directorships he becomes almost a criminal. I think such attacks, instead of being in the interests of commercial purity, have precisely the opposite effect. I believe that a man of unspotted honour who gives his labour to the direction of a public company does the very wisest thing he can do in the interests of this commercial country. No one has ever thought it worth while to ask me to become a director, and I can assure them, especially after the criticism which has been so freely made this afternoon, that I should regard any such requests from an honourable company as a very high compliment indeed. I strongly object, in the public interest, to this notion that a person is doing something he ought not to do, something which he ought to be ashamed of, if he accepts the responsibility of aiding one of those great corporations which carry on so much of the business on which the country itself so much depends. Such energies and such brains as Providence may have given to any persons in this country may well be used in this manner. I cannot withdraw from the position I have held heretofore on this question. I am certain everyone of my colleagues in the Cabinet who still hold directorships have carefully considered whether they are such as to permit them to discharge with credit the duties of the office to which they have been called. Some of them have consulted me on this particular point, and I have always found them fastidious to the last degree in the decisions to which they have come. I have not pressed my views upon them; I have not asked them for information, and I do not mean to ask them. I have absolute confidence in their honour and discretion, and I believe it is confidence in the honour and discretion of the public men who are called to office in this country, and not in any hard and fast illogical rule laid down by this House, that the credit and honour of public life in this country for all time will depend.

*MR HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) said that if the hon. Member divided the House on this Amendment he should certainly support him. He should do so without imputing to any member of the present Cabinet the desire to do anything dishonourable. He took his stand on what he regarded as a fundamental principle of right, which was that no man should ever be placed in a position in which there might be a conflict between his interests and his duty. The members of a Cabinet exercised quasi-judicial duties; they determined what measures they should introduce and what Bills they would support which were introduced by others. One of the fundamental principles of law, ethics, and morality was that no man should have an interest in any case in which he had to exercise judicial functions. That was the foundation of his objection. The objection to Ministers being directors had been put by speakers on both sides of the House upon two grounds. In the first place it was said that being a director took away some portion of the time which otherwise would be devoted to the public service. There was a great deal in that objection, but if that were the only one he thought possibly that it might be got over, although it appeared rather inconsistent that Members of the Civil Service should be precluded from holding directorships in public companies. He rested his objection on the higher ground that Ministers who were directors of great public companies should not hold those directorships while they were members of the Cabinet. Occasions must arise in the course of their deliberations in the Cabinet when the interests of those particular companies would be more or less involved. It was impossible to disabuse the public mind of the belief that the fact of Cabinet Ministers being members of public companies would operate upon the policy which they would advocate in this House. That was a most alarming state of things, and would tend greatly to shake public confidence in the integrity and the honour of the House of Commons.

The First Lord of the Treasury had endeavoured, by a sort of *reductio ad absurdum*, to get rid of the argument in favour of this Motion, and he said that if they pushed this argument to its extreme conclusion, no great landowner ought to be a member of the Cabinet. Could anything be more remote from the question they were now considering than such a suggestion? Did they expect that officers in the Civil Service should have no property? Was there going to be a rule to say that no man should enter the Civil Service unless he disposed of all his private property? How could that be compared with the fact of Cabinet Ministers being directors? A Cabinet Minister who was a director must either betray his trust to his company or to his country by letting the interests of the private body of which he was a member prevail over his duty as a Cabinet Minister.

He therefore dismissed that argument as almost puerile and absurd. The suggestion that his hon. and learned friend the Member for South Donegal made a personal attack on the Duke of Devonshire was also unworthy of the First Lord of the Treasury. Surely the House of Commons was not to be overshadowed and overpowered by any name, however great. Surely the maxim of the law, that "the King can do no wrong," was not to be extended to read "the Duke of Devonshire can do no wrong." Why was that introduced unless it was to throw dust in the eyes of some hon. Gentlemen opposite and create a prejudice at the outset against the principle of this Amendment? They were not here dealing with any particular individuals. They were dealing with a broad fact, and that fact was recognised in almost every department of the State. Any man who knew anything of the law knew that judges who were shareholders in a company could not sit and hear any case in which that company was interested, no matter how remote the interest was. The principle was recognised that there should be no conflict between the interest of the individual and the duty of a judge in the administration of justice. How did that differ in principle from the case involved here? If a director in one of those great gain-making companies, such as the Peninsular and Oriental Company, went into the Cabinet and a question was raised, the decision of which might materially affect the interests for good or bad of that company, how could they expect the public, however undeservedly, not to come to the conclusion that that man had not an unbiassed judgment in determining the question. It was obvious to any fair-minded man that there was a fundamental principle at stake which was violated by the evil against which this Amendment was levelled.

It was said that it would be a very hard thing when choosing a Cabinet to ask any hon. or right hon. Gentleman who happened to hold a directorship to give up that directorship. He could not see the hardship of that. Cabinet Ministers were well paid for their services, and to make use of a homely phrase, "There are as good fish in the sea as ever were caught." If an efficient candidate for the Cabinet could not accept the office because of his holding a directorship in some great public company, there would be plenty of others equally good to fill the place. Therefore, there could be no suggestion that any public loss or inconvenience would result from such a state of things. The other suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman would be that if they extended this to its logical conclusion, no shareholder in a company ought to sit on the House of Commons. That, of course, was quite a different thing. Some people thought that if a Bill was brought forward seriously affecting the interests if a company, an ordinary unofficial Member who was a shareholder should hesitate to record his vote. A director was a trustee for the whole body of those who had elected him to that position. Take the case of the London and Globe Finance Corporation. If any of the right hon. Gentlemen who were now members of the Cabinet, deservedly respected as they were, had been directors of that company, would the fact not have involved more or less a reflection, not only on the directors themselves but on their colleagues? He trusted that hon. Members would by their votes show that in their opinion the important declaration contained in the Amendment should be the guide in the formation of every Cabinet. This Amendment was not a Vote of Want of Confidence in the Government of the day, but it gave hon. Members the opportunity of honestly recording their opinion as to whether the Cabinet should be above suspicion, and whether there should be any violation of the principle that no man should be in a position where there was conflict between his duty and his interest.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 109; Noes, 147. (Division List, No. 5.)

AYES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Ambrose, Robert
Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Channing, Francis Allston
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Davies, M. Vaughan- (*Cardign*
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duffy, William J.
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Horniman, Frederick John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, David B. (*Swansea*)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Law, H. Alex. (*Donegal, W.*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*)
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, South*)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (*Cork*)
O'Brien, Kendal (*Tipperary Mid*
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Brien, William (*Cork*)
O'Connor, James (*Wicklow, W.*
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (*Mayo, N.*)
O'Kelly, James (*Roscommon, N.*
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Power, Patrick Joseph

Rea, Russell
Redmond, John E. (*Waterford*)
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (*Northants*
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glamorgan, E.*)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*)
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Williams, Osmond (*Merioneth*)
Wilson, Henry J. (*York, W. R.*)
Wilson, John (*Durham Mid.*)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. MacNeill and Mr. Schwann.

NOES.

Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (*Middx.*)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bullard, Sir Harry
Campbell, Rt Hn J A (*Glasg.*)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig, Charles C. (*Antrim, S.*)
Cranborne, Lord
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Davenport, William Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzroy, Hon. Edw. Algernon
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, Hn, J. E. (*Elgin & Nairn*
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-*Salop*
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Greene, W. Raymond- (*Cambs*
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashfd*
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Helder, Augustus
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (*Sheff., B'tside*)
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Knowles, Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
Malcolm, Ian
Maxwell, W J H. (*Dumfriesshire*
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Mitchell, William
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, David J (*Walthamstow*
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn. A Graham (*Bute*
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (*Stalybridge*
Ridley, S. Forde (*Bethnal Green*
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B (*Isle of Wight*
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (*Notts.*)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (*Yorks.*)
Wodehouse, Rt Hn. E. R. (*Bath*)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Main Question again proposed.

THE CONDITION OF THE NAVY.

*SIR WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead) moved, as an Amendment to the Address, at end, to add: "And we humbly express our regret that no mention is made in His Majesty's Gracious Speech of the unsatisfactory condition of His Majesty's Navy." He said that during the recess he had been much struck with the great number of speeches that had been made in England and Scotland by Ministers, ex-Ministers, and Members of Parliament, and in looking over these speeches he found that, with hardly an exception, the importance of the Navy was dwelt upon. What, however, had struck him as very peculiar in all these references was that there never was any allusion to an efficient Navy: it was all a question of the number of ships. The idea that possessed the minds of those who expressed their love for the Navy was apparently "Give us plenty of ships and our Empire will be safe." That might be so; but these gentlemen, for all they said, would be satisfied with a flotilla of mud-punts. He had put his Amendment down on the Paper solely for the reason that he wished to show that the question of the Navy was not a matter of mere platform platitudes and oratorical display. These would not secure an efficient Navy, although he admitted that some hon. Members wished to increase the Navy at the expense of the Army. What he wanted, by means of his Amendment, was to insist that the Navy was in an unsatisfactory condition. He started away with that. Now, he, for one, with all due allowance to the experts, so-called, held that our modern Navy was unsatisfactory, and he would endeavour to prove his position. What constituted a real modern warship, an efficient ship? He used the word "efficient," because they were dealing with efficiency. Further, he would ask, "Have we got efficient warships?" An efficient warship ought to be of maximum offensive power, of maximum defensive power, of maximum steaming power, with safety, and of minimum dimensions with least exposure to an enemy. He would endeavour to show that we had not got such vessels. He would put his indictment in as plain language as possible, divested entirely of all professional technicalities. What had we got as a safe battleship? He would take the "Russell," which was built on the Tyne by Palmer, was supposed to be a perfect example of the efficiency of British Naval Power, and was to be sent to the Mediterranean to relieve the "Canopus."

It must be borne in mind that in the old days of wooden fighting ships a great amount of value was given to what was called the fighting tops. These tops were large spaces on which sharp-shooters stood for the purpose of shooting down on the enemy's vessels. In those days vessels were fought "hammer and tongs" fashion, alongside each other, which gave our seamen an opportunity to board and capture the enemy. But the modern style of fighting was very different. The idea was still dominant with the Admiralty, and with our so-called experts, that the fighting would take place with the opposing vessels alongside each other. But in future naval battles the ships would be 4,000, 5,000, or 6,000 yards apart. There would be no more "hammer and tongs" fighting, and no more boarding pikes. We would try to demolish the enemy's ships with our big guns. Now what did we find on the "Russell"? There was a foremast and a mainmast both with fighting tops each weighing forty-five or fifty tons. Now, and this was a question of efficiency, what was the use of fighting tops on a modern warship? Supposing that the "Russell" was in action and that her foremast was struck by a 380 lb. shell. Why the mast, weighing forty or fifty tons, would, if it fell forward, crush and disable the forward gun turret; if it fell astern it would smash every funnel on board; and if it fell to the side it would destroy the bulwarks and broadside armaments. Suppose the mast had fallen on to the funnels, the men would all be asphyxiated between decks. These appliances were not fit to stand the stern test of war. The ships would be destroyed before they could escape. The Navy was relying on things of the past which were now practically useless.

He might be asked what he would propose instead. He would make an efficient warship with the least possible number of things on deck that could be carried away. Instead of thirty-five, forty or fifty ton masts, he would put up a light pole for signalling and showing lights, and if that were carried away the bluejackets would be able to throw it overboard. With reference to funnels, he would go back to the old plan of telescopic funnels. Take one of the four-funnelled frauds, the modern cruisers, and put her into action. Where would she be if her funnels were knocked down? He would have no top hamper on the vessels, and only the least possible number of objects that could be hit. He had shown the House, he thought very plainly, and at least practically, that the Navy had not efficient ships in that respect. This was a question of design. He wanted to show that the designs were bad, and that an efficient warship could not be built from them. The top hamper and gear which was now fitted on deck was a very dangerous adjunct to a warship.

He would now refer to the guns. Two and a half or three years ago he brought to the attention of the House the undergunning of ships in the Navy, and he referred at that time to the great displacement of Navy vessels. If the least attention had been given to what such vessels should be, as offensive machines, they would never have been gunned as they were. He admitted that the Admiralty were now paying attention to the matter. Two great cruisers, the "Powerful" and the "Terrible," were built eight years ago in reply to the construction of two Russian cruisers. The "Powerful" and the "Terrible" cost over a million of money each, and it was only now that more guns were being put into them. Why was not that done at the beginning? Where were the experts, and where was the efficiency? Several of the ships in the Navy were undergunned, and there was no getting away from that fact. Take the "County" class, which were being built at present. What was their discharge? He thought only 1,400 lbs. Why was that? He for one could not see the reason for it; neither could he see the efficiency of it; but he could see the weakness of it. He had taken a special interest in the "Terrible" and the "Powerful," which the then Chief Constructor of the Navy had fitted with French contrivances instead of boilers. He himself warned the Chief Constructor of the danger that was looming ahead as the result of what he was doing, of the rock he was going to strike upon, and the ruin to which he was about to bring the British Navy. So much was he interested in the matter that he wrote to the Chief Constructor and told him that he did not wish to see one leaf taken from his laurels, but for Heaven's sake to be careful what he was doing.

The House of Commons was nothing if not a business assembly. Hon. Members were not theorists. They should be all practical Britons, and look at things from a practical point of view, and they should not be upset by theoretical notions. Boilering was the weak point in the Admiralty, who imagined themselves the immaculate conceptors of new contrivances. He could not understand the weakness, but he knew that the Admiralty were afraid to own up to their own shortcomings. The "Powerful" was sent to China, and he was not exaggerating one iota when he said that the vessel consumed all the spare coal at Colombo and Singapore on the way out. He knew the quantity of coal she burned, and it was startling. She was now home again, and what had taken place? Why, nothing. She was lying down at Portsmouth, and let the Admiralty now try and steam her the twenty-three knots for which she was designed. Although she was not yet two years old, they could not do it. She was simply scrap. Then take the case of the "Terrible." Much had been heard about the men of the "Terrible," who were terrible in name and in nature, and about their grand shooting with Captain Percy Scott's marker. But what did the "Terrible" steam? She steamed from Wei-hai-wei to Hong Kong in nine months; and during the whole time that she was out in China he did not believe that she did six months fair steaming. Where was she now? She was lying at Portsmouth, and let the Admiralty try and take twenty-two knots out of her if they could.

He wanted to know how the money was being spent, and to direct attention to the extravagance, the squandering, and the inefficiency which characterised the Department which was supposed to give the nation a proper Navy. He challenged contradiction of what he had said. Hon. Members were elected to look after the interests of the Empire, and were they to sit dumb when Estimates for £33,000,000 sterling were brought before them, and never ask a question as to how the money was to be spent? No Member of Parliament had a right to represent a constituency unless he went to the bottom of the expenditure of the country That was his position, and that was the position he had taken up ever since he had the honour of being a Member of the House. But he could not get at the bottom of the cost, or of the extravagance and ramifications which were at work. The result was—and he was sorry to say it—inefficiency, and ships that could not be depended upon. He would not make a single statement that could not be substantiated up to the hilt. He had oftentimes been accused of exaggeration and of painting the picture incorrectly; but every word he had uttered had been proved up to the hilt. He had shown that the ships on which they were depending were inefficient, and that they were badly designed to meet the stress and strain of real war. They appeared very well on paper; nothing was more beautiful than a warship on paper; but it was war they would have to face; if they were not fit for that, then he held they were inefficient; they would come to grief the moment their top hampers were blown down. No number of letters in *The Times*, or apologies from the late Chief Constructor could get over the facts, which could not be disputed.

He now wished to refer to what he would call the financial aspect of the unsatisfactory condition of the Navy. As he had said, it was the duty of every Member to get to the bottom of the expenditure of the country if he could. What did they find with regard to the Navy? He would show the House conclusively how the money was being spent. Unfortunately hon. Members were kept in the dark, and it was only by adopting certain methods that he got to know what was happening. He would show the House what the country had to pay for inefficient ships. It was well known that the body politic of the Admiralty was nothing else than an experimenting body. He would show that the work which was being carried on by the Admiralty could have been carried on for a mere song if the experts knew their business. An expert, after all, was a man who ought to know his business; and an expert at the Admiralty who did not know his business cost the country millions. It was well known that the Admiralty decided to fit a German boiler into the "Medusa" and a Yarrow boiler into the "Medea." The Scotch boilers in those two ships were perfectly good, but the ships were sent down to the Tyne, to Palmer's, who were given a free hand to cut up the decks and take out the so-called old boilers—which were quite as fit as a German boiler which the Admiralty knew nothing about—and as the Yarrow boiler, of which they knew only a little. No specification was given, and the job was carried out on what was known as "time and lime." Why did the Admiralty take out first-class boilers and put in boilers of which they knew little or nothing? £50,000 would be spent on each of the ships before the job was finished. Why could not the Admiralty experts—the word "experts" grated on him—buy two collier steamers for £4,000 each? He imagined that many hon. Members would be glad to sell two of their ships at that figure. The old boilers could be taken out and the new ones put in; the ships could be run up and down the coast carrying coal for the Admiralty and earning their own money; and the horse-power, the quantity of coal burned, and the defects could be ascertained. That was one way in which money was being spent without a word being said. Take another case. The "Diadem," a brand new ship, was sent down to Glasgow to Fairfield's, and was handed over without one scintilla of a specification as to the work to be done. The Government were to pay for the labour and the material, 20 per cent. for charges, and 10 per cent. for profit. He would take on the entire Fleet for that, and make his fortune mighty quickly out of it. But would any business man call that business? At present there was a ship on the Tyne, and one of the officials told him that the contractors would keep her as long as they liked, as they had no specification and there was no check. Hundreds of thousands of pounds were being spent in that way, and there was nothing to show for it but an inefficient Navy.

He would be prepared to vote money without demur. No one could say that he had ever raised his voice against expenditure on the Navy; but he had raised his voice against building inefficient ships and deluding the country. He would give the House a list of the inefficient ships. When the "Canopus," a first-class battleship, was sent abroad there were the usual newspaper platitudes, coming from the Admiralty, of course, as to what a magnificent vessel she was. All the vocabulary of Mesopotamia was used Now the "Canopus" was home again, and although she was only three years old she was practically done. Where was the "Montagu"? She was lying in harbour now and could not steam. And why? Simply because the water tube boilers put into her would not hold peas, let alone water. The Secretary to the Admiralty at one time was a capital critic, but he was muzzled now. He could not, however, get away from the fact that there was a great squandering of the public money going on, and that we were only getting inefficiency in return. He would read a list of vessels which were practically of no use to us at the present moment. They included the "Montagu," the "Canopus," the "Crecy," the "Glory," the "Terrible," the "Niobe," the "Diadem," the "Furious," the "Europa," the "Hermes," the "Pactolus," and the "Hyacinth." These were only a few of the vessels which were laid up, and he wanted to direct the attention of the House to the fact that all of them were new ships. They had cost the country from £1,000,000 downwards. They were vessels on which we and the country were told we could depend for the defence of the Empire. Was that the case? It was not. They were cripples. Where was their boasted efficiency?

Parliament voted £32,000,000 or £33,000,000 annually for building and keeping up ships which were of no use. How long were they going to continue that? He could not understand why it was they were all so dumb and silent in the face of such a grave position. Members of Parliament in their speeches of late had had a good deal to say about the Navy, which they had described as our first line of defence, and on the maintenance of which they had advocated the spending of more money, even going so far as to suggest that less should be devoted to the Army. They had adopted that line because they had said that upon the Navy we must depend for the security of our food supply in time of war. That was all very well theoretically, but what were the practical facts? Our ships could not steam, and why? No man could fight a battle, or run a race, or do any work if his heart was bad. What was the condition of the British Fleet? The boilers are the heart of a ship. The heart of every one of the ships was bad. They could not trust them. Their dockyards were piled up with vessels awaiting repair. The Government establishments could not overtake the work, and consequently the ships were being sent to Barrow, the Clyde, and the Tyne. He challenged the Admiralty to disprove these facts; he challenged them to show there was a single ship they could keep on full-speed power continuously without coming to grief. He was sorry to have to say these things. Nothing would give him greater pleasure than to be able to declare that our Fleet was incomparable and invincible. But when he looked at these vessels—which had cost the nation millions of money—lying in our dockyards, doing no work, he was driven sorrowfully to the conclusion that the public money was being spent uselessly and wastefully.

Take the case of the submarines. What were we getting in regard to them for our money? We were obtaining these vessels from America, and at the same time we were going to France and Germany for our boilers. We had better have the engine-rooms staffed with Frenchmen, for apparently we could not do without Frenchmen in our Navy. But to return to the submarines. He told them long ago that they would not do, that he feared they would soon hear of more explosions with fatal results, and that they would have further instances of money being wasted. One objection to them was that gasoline engines were used in them. The fumes from these were very deleterious. One never knew what was going to happen, and he would not be the least surprised at any moment to hear of the bursting up of some of these vessels. Had the Admiralty had the interests of the country at heart, had they been the true patriots they represented themselves to be, they would have offered a prize of £5,000 or £10,000 for the best submarine boat of British design, instead of buying them from America and France. Why did they not experiment with them before they purchased them? They obtained a number of submarine boats from the States without knowing their value and without giving them a fair trial. Was it business for a Department which had the administration of public money to go and buy vessels costing £30,000 or £40,000 a piece without first trying them? He ventured to say it was gross extravagance. There had been a gross squandering of the public money, and it was the duty of the House to look into the matter.

By pursuing such a policy they were tending to ruin the Empire, not to save it. Their ships were bad—the House knew it, and the Admiralty knew it. The designs were bad, and the vessels were under-gunned. He had warned them often, but he had been speaking as unto milestones and not to men. He had warned them that with such cripples for vessels they might expect at any time to hear of disasters involving the loss of many lives. They had no fleet on which they could depend. He had attempted to prove, and he challenged disproof, that they were squandering the nation's money and getting no equivalent for it. They were designing ships which would be of no use in war time, and they were putting in them Babcock and Wilcox boilers which were tried in the merchant navy years ago and were found not to be a success. At one time the Admiralty was "Bellevilled," now it was being "Rosenthaled." He knew all the moves. It was the duty of Parliament to look to the safety of the Empire, but they are not performing that duty. He thought he had proved incontestably that the money voted by the House for these vessels was not spent wisely or well, and that in time it would be found to be detrimental to the best interests of the Empire. He begged to move the Amendment standing in his name.

*Mr. RENWICK (Newcastle-on-Tyne) seconded the motion. He said he represented a constituency which, like that of the hon. Member who had just spoken, took a great interest in naval matters, although on political topics their views differed. He was not an expert. He desired, however, to give expression to the views of his constituents, views which were, in fact, those of the man in the street, with regard to this important matter. What were the reasons generally advanced for the statement that the Navy was in an unsatisfactory condition? The first was that so many of our ships were fitted with water-tube boilers, the second was scarcity of men to man the Navy, and the third was the large number of ships that were at all times unfit to go to sea. Why was it that at a time when there was such uneasiness expressed in regard to our food supplies in time of war there was such a general lack of confidence in the Navy? He ventured to say that in addition to the reasons already mentioned there were the following, which called for serious consideration—the increased strength of foreign navies, the importance of our food supply, the acquisition by America of our fastest steamers, and the publicity which had been given to the failure and defects of our brand new cruiser the "Good Hope," which had recently taken the Colonial Secretary to South Africa. Speaking not as an expert on naval matters, but as a merchant shipowner who had for many years taken some interest in the improvement of boilers, he was absolutely surprised that the Admiralty had caused our Navy to be used to so large an extent for experiments in connection with water-tube boilers. He had made enquiries in regard to these boilers in all directions from experienced men, and he was told that the main advantage to be gained was that they got up steam quickly. He was also told that they did not weigh so heavy as the Scotch boilers. These were all-important advantages, but what were the disadvantages? The first was that they are apt to break down at a most critical time, and, secondly, that the repairs and renewals of these boilers were most expensive. Concurrently with the outlay of a large amount on repairs, the ships had to lie idle for a considerable time. They also found that the stokers had lost confidence in the boilers. That, in itself, would be a most serious matter in time of war.

They further found that there was a very heavy coal consumption. What was the use of having a boiler lighter than the Scotch boiler if they were going to counteract that advantage by carrying a larger supply of coal? For thirty years he had been told that the water-tube boiler was the boiler of the future. It appeared to him that it was still the boiler of the future. Thirty-five years ago water-tube boilers were fitted to vessels on the Tyne, but they had to take them out. They were no doubt excellent boilers in some respects, and he knew of one which had since been used most successfully for driving machinery on land, although while it was in a vessel at sea it was found to be absolutely inefficient. He found from a Return moved by the noble Lord the Member for Woolwich that the highest outlay in respect of Scotch boilers in ships named in the Report was about £8,250

But what was the case with the water-tube boiler? The "Hermes" was only commissioned in 1899, and no less than £40,863 had been spent on her boilers, including £32,400 for new boilers. Yet he could mention a ship in which he was interested that had on board a boiler of 150-lbs. pressure, which was built in 1882, and on which not 500 shillings had since been spent. The "Europa" was commissioned in July 1899. The expenditure on her water-tube boilers had since amounted to £26,935. In the case of the "Powerful," which was commissioned in 1897 the expenditure was returned at £20,675. What had the mercantile marine shipowners been doing for the last thirty or forty years? They had been endeavouring to get a boiler which would last for a large number of years and decrease the coal consumption. That boiler was found in the Scotch boiler. There was no better or more efficient boiler.

Our Navy had been made the ground for a gigantic series of experiments with these water-tube boilers. He did not blame the Admiralty for experimenting with new inventions. It was their duty to do so, but the Empire ought not to be exposed to the danger of having many of its finest ships fitted with boilers which were practically unknown and in which there was no confidence. He desired to press upon the Admiralty the fact that these boilers were likely to break down in critical times, such as when a vessel was called upon to pursue an enemy, or to retreat from one who was too strong. Even if they had to sacrifice some small advantages, they wanted a boiler in which they had confidence. He would like to ask the Admiralty whether they proposed to fit water-tube boilers to the two new fast Cunarders which were to go longer voyages and be able to overtake and destroy the very fastest merchant cruisers of other nations. In view of what was to be expected of them, they ought not to put in boilers in which they had no confidence.

He was amazed at the number of comparatively modern ships he saw lying absolutely idle in the dockyards. Some of them had been only short voyages and others had practically never been commissioned. He was told that in the first place something was the matter with the machinery or boilers, and then, in a sort of confidential way, that there were not sufficient men to man them. What was the use of continually building new ships if there were no means of manning them? In a Blue-book issued last session he found that in 1891 we had in the mercantile marine 127,567 British born sailors, 23,884 foreign born sailors and 21,322 Lascars, but on 31st March, 1901, we only had 120,412 British-born seamen, whilst the number of foreigners had risen to 32,614, and the Lascars numbered 33,610. While, therefore, there was a very small increase in the total number, it was entirely among the Lascars and foreigners, and the British numbers had decreased by 7,150. Bearing those figures in mind, and remembering that whilst in 1891–2 we only required 61,000 sailors and marines for the Navy, in 1901–2 we required 104,000, and in 1902–3 the number had risen to 120,000, he would ask the Admiralty to tell them whether they were increasing their reserves in a similar ratio to the increase in the number of men required, year after year, in the Navy. This was a most serious matter, because, in time of war, the first thing the Admiralty would need would be to take men from the mercantile marine to reinforce the Navy. If that were done, what was to become of our food supplies in time of war? He sincerely trusted that one of the results of the debate would be that the naval authorities would cease to allow our ships to be used wholesale for experimental matters. If they had made mistakes, let them have the courage to retrieve them, and take care to regain the confidence of the people in the Navy.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

> "And we humbly express our regret that no mention is made in His Majesty's Gracious Speech of the unsatisfactory condition of His Majesty's Navy." —(*Sir William Allan.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) said he rose for the purpose of making a few observations on the Motion submitted to the House by his hon. friend opposite. He hardly thought the hon. Gentleman behind him, who had seconded the Motion, could have very carefully read the Resolution, because he had practically seconded a Motion expressing a wish that there should be in the King's Speech the words, "My Lords and Gentlemen, the condition of my Navy is unsatisfactory." He deprecated raising a discussion upon this great question in this form. They were close to the time when they would have an explanatory statement as to the condition of the Navy from the authorised representatives of the Admiralty, when they could discuss it. He deprecated raising a debate upon the matter in this way, because, in his opinion, it was neither in the interests of the public service nor of the Navy itself.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.) said he shared the views of the last speaker that it would be convenient to discuss this question more thoroughly than could be done now after he had had an opportunity of explaining the policy of the Admiralty in greater detail to the House, but it was due to the House, when once the subject was raised, for the Minister responsible to the House to make some sort of reply. He had listened, as he always did, with great interest to the hon. Member who brought forward the Motion, but he was disappointed that the hon. Gentleman should have thought it necessary to take an exaggerated view of the incapacity of the Admiralty. The House would welcome *bonâ fide* criticism of any Department of the State, and especially of the Admiralty, but he did not think that criticism became more valuable when carried to the extreme of some of the expressions used by the hon. Member. The great questions of armament and machinery were not dealt with under the authority of Government officers in the light spirit suggested; and he pointed out that it had been his own happy fortune, during the two years he had been in office, to see a large number of changes which the hon. Member and others had advocated carried into practical effect. He was not there to defend the Belleville boiler. He was exonerated from that task by the report of the Boiler Committee. He had never been able to see the wisdom of the great experiment which was made in the introduction of the Belleville boiler to the whole of our ships under construction. But that was a matter long past; and the Committee had reported to the effect that the Belleville boiler, though very good in some respects, was the least suitable water-tube boiler for the Navy. His hon. friend would give the Admiralty credit for the fact that from that time the Belleville boiler was discontinued, and it had been discarded for His Majesty's ships. The hon. Member had been an advocate of the cylindrical boiler. For the first time for many years, the Admiralty were trying the newest and latest type of cylindrical boiler in our ships, and they were building ship after ship in which the latest pattern of cylindrical boiler was being inserted. The hon. Member had often alleged that they had been comparing the cylindrical boilers in our ships put in ten years ago with the latest pattern of water-tube boiler, but they were also giving a trial to the new type of cylindrical boiler. Though he did not dissent from the finding of the Boiler Committee, he thought that the opinion expressed by them was far from being generally adopted. He could not assent to the hon. Member's criticism when he spoke of the inefficiency of the Navy—that was a phrase he could not consent to allow to go unchallenged. Was there any country in the world where the practice this country had adopted had not been followed? If they had to go to war, they would find foreign ships with precisely the same type of boiler.

*SIR WILLIAM ALLAN: That is no argument at all. If your opponent has a wooden leg are you to put on one also?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I think the argument is a very strong one.

*SIR WILLIAM ALLAN: It is no argument at all.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he thought that the argument was a very strong one when it was found that the navies of all other countries were combining in the interest of efficiency to introduce and use certain appliances adopted by this country. The hon. Member had spoken of the Babcock and Wilcox boiler. He had heard him before now draw comparisons not altogether favourable to this country in favour of the United States of America, but the Babcock and Wilcox boiler had been selected by the United States Navy for half their battleships and the Niclausse boiler was also used; so that the hon. Member was not correct when he supposed that we are alone in trying this unknown boiler.

*SIR WILLIAM ALLAN: The Babcock and Wilcox boiler, the right hon. Gentleman must remember, is an American boiler and not an English boiler.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that he was unable to see the relevancy of that observation. As to the designs of our ships, we had the advantage of having two designers unparalleled in their career, and it was very remarkable that their design should have been condemned.

*SIR WILLIAM ALLAN: I have not seen the designs.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Then the hon. Member should not condemn them.

*SIR WILLIAM ALLAN: I condemned the ships.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: In what respect had these designs been condemned? Mention had been made of the "Russell." He had been in many foreign battleships and in all our own, and there was not a single battleship in any foreign Navy which was so lightly masted, or which had such little top-hamper, or was so little encumbered as the "Russell." If errors so gross and palpable had been made by our designers, it was remarkable that the errors should be copied in an exaggerated form by foreign designers. The hon. Member quoted the "Powerful" and "Terrible" as two vessels that showed beyond contradiction the failure of the Admiralty designs in comparison with those of the "Rossia" and the "Rurik." He would take the opinion of any naval officer as to which of those two types of ships he would rather be on board of in an action. He had been in both; and he could only say Heaven help the men in those vessels with unprotected guns in an action with vessels like the "Powerful" and "Terrible," which had all their guns protected. The hon. Member said that the Admiralty were entirely forgetting the question of gunnery in our ships. He himself had shared the opinion of the hon. Member that some of our ships had not the gun power that they ought to have. But that was years ago. Class after class of those ships had been strengthened because other ships had been built to compete with them. The "Terrible" and the "Powerful," the "Centurion," and the "Barfleur," and all the ships in the "Eclipse" class had had their armament strengthened; and the new ships like the "New Zealand" and the "Duke of Edinburgh"—which really ought to be chosen for comparison with the new foreign ships—possessed a protection and gun power which were unparalleled in any Navy of the world. The way in which the hon. Member had spoken of submarines was an example of the extraordinary rashness and recklessness of his assertions. He said that the Admiralty ought to have experimented with some of these vessels before committing themselves, and ought to have introduced British talent into their construction. That was precisely what the Admiralty had done. They bought five of what was at the time the one successful type, which was available so that trials might be made in more than one place and at more than one time. The vessels were experimented with and examined from every point of view by exceedingly competent naval officers and engineers. The value of their suggestions was utilised to the full, and as a result it had been possible in this brief space of time to produce a vessel, substantially of British design and wholly of British manufacture, which was believed to be a great improvement on the original boat.

Then the hon. Member fell foul of the Admiralty for the system of repairs which they had adopted. He appealed to any large shipowner to say whether this system was not the most profitable, and whether it was not found that the contractors, instead of swindling those who entrusted work to them, saw it to be to their own interest to do the work as quickly, cheaply, and efficiently as they could. To say that the Admiralty knew nothing about what was going on in the repairing yards was one of the extraordinary exaggerations into which the hon. Member allowed himself to fall. The Admiralty had inspectors in all these yards, though personally he did not place his chief reliance on the minuteness of their inspection. He relied much more on the fact that the Admiralty was dealing with great companies who knew that the continuance of the Government's custom, and the renewal of orders, must depend upon the success with which their contracts were carried out. He would ask the House to wait until the Admiralty had carried their experiments further; and when the first-fruits of those experiments had been gathered he believed it would be possible to show that the experience of all the great mercantile companies was not contradicted by that of the Admiralty.

The hon. Member for Newcastle had fallen into a fallacy, which vitiated his argument, of comparing the needs of the mercantile marine with those of the Navy. Any conclusion based on an analogy between men-of-war and mercantile vessels must be misleading. Probably the new Cunarders were not to be fitted with water-tube boilers, as the hon. Member suggested. But the class of work which they had to perform was totally dissimilar from that of a cruiser doing the ordinary work of the Navy. Those ships were specifically designed to enable them to overtake the ships of a precisely similar character with which they might be confronted in time of war. As long as they performed that office, it was all that could be expected of them. The case was not strengthened by saying that their arrangements differed from those of a cruiser which had to carry on the ordinary work of a cruiser in time of peace. As to the question of manning, there was no difficulty about the manning of the Navy such as the hon. Member suggested. There were certain branches of the Navy in which the Admiralty intended to have a larger *personnel;* but the *personnel* as voted by Parliament was actually over-borne. He hoped in a few days to lay before the House the proposals of the Government with regard to these *lacunæ*, which undoubtedly did exist. Sir Edward Grey's Committee had reported, and its recommendations had not been left out of sight; and he should soon be able to give the effect of the Admiralty's proposals with regard to any shortage in the *personnel* of the Navy. He must protest emphatically against the acceptance of such an Amendment, and the suggestion that the Navy was at the present time inefficient. He absolutely denied that suggestion. The Navy was making very rapid strides in the direction of improvement. The advance was palpable; and the hon. Member for Gateshead, instead of indulging in jeremiads, might have given some credit for the progress which was being made.

*Sir WILLIAM ALLAN asked leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed:—

THE HIGHLAND CROFTERS.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said the subject of the Motion which he now proposed to move he had brought before the House on many previous occasions, and he was now going to make another attempt to see if he could not soften the heart of the Government in connection with this matter, and persuade them to make another effort to put a stop to the enormous extensions which were being made to the deer forests in the highlands and islands of Scotland. This was an old-standing grievance. Twenty years ago there were agrarian grievances in the Highlands and islands of Scotland, and the Government of that day established the Napier Commission, which reported that no one could contemplate the changing of good pasture land into deer forests without regret. The Report of the Napier Commission was issued in 1883, but nothing had been done to prevent the extension of these deer forests. He submitted that the Government had neglected this matter throughout, though happily Sir George Trevelyan, when at the Scotch Office, did succeed in introducing a Bill, which he passed into law, securing fixity of tenure to the crofters. He could not understand why the Government were so blind to the facts. It ought to be their policy to keep the Highlanders, who were a fine, sturdy and martial race, in the Highlands.

The rentals for deer forests amounted in 1870 to £73,000, in 1877 to £230,000, and in 1886 to £363,000, while at present they amounted to over £500,000. The increase of the deer-forest area was condemned by all who had the interests and well-being of the Highland people at heart, but of course the owners of the deer forests did not want their high rentals disturbed. Between 1883 and 1899, thirty-four new forests were created, and the extensions between 1891 and 1898 amounted to 142,000 acres, while since that date the increase had been even more rapid. The House would doubtless be told that no evictions had taken place. That was true, but what about the evictions before the deer forests were made? Years ago the people were evicted from the land to make big sheep runs, and now, as the leases of the sheep farms ran out, the farms were being turned into deer forests. What was wanted was that the people should be put back on the land, and the sheep runs used by the people for the benefit of the people.

Some consideration should be given to the Reports of Royal Commissions. Where was the use of appointing such bodies unless action were taken on their findings? For twenty years the recommendations of the Napier Commission had been before the country, but nothing had resulted. The Liberals would have taken action by which 500,000 acres would now have been placed at the disposal of the people, but Sir George Trevelyan was opposed by the then Opposition on the ground that the Bill he introduced was not sufficiently generous. It had been suggested that landlords, when they desired to extend their deer forests, should come before Parliament with private Bills. He thought that would be a very cumbersome process, especially as machinery already existed whereby the matter could be properly dealt with. Hitherto the Crofters Commission had done its work most satisfactorily, and he thought the time had arrived when its powers might be so extended that the Commission should be the body to decide what land should be set aside for the people. All that was necessary was that the Government should put that machinery into working order. Before the Napier Commission reported, the usual plea of the Government was that there was no land in the Highlands suitable for the people. The Deer Forest Commissioners, however, showed that there were now used for sport no less than 1,782,785 acres of land suitable for occupation by the people, of which 795,000 acres were suitable for new holdings, 440,000 acres for the extension of existing holdings, and 548,000 acres for moderate-sized farms.

The excuse now was lack of money. It was a strange thing that the Government could find any amount of money to put the Boers back on their farms, and to do things in other lands. Why did they not set their house at home in order? That would be the more creditable course to pursue. For years the Government dangled before the eyes of the country the promise of a scheme. At last the Congested Districts Board was established, its chief function being that of migrating crofters and cottars from the congested areas to other parts. That Board was endowed with many powers, for the carrying out of which Parliament had voted altogether about £150,000. But of that sum only £18,000 had been spent on the purchase of land, and £21,000 in connection with small holdings and loans; as the greater part of the latter sum would be repaid, it might be said that only £18,000 out of £150,000 had been spent on the main purpose for which the Board was created, viz., the migration of the people from the congested areas. On the Island of Lewis there were 30,000 people. How they lived was a mystery. But not a single shilling had been expended in Ross-shire or Argyllshire on migration. A Report had been prepared on the social condition of the Island of Lewis. He would therefore not press that matter, but simply express the hope that the Government would speedily act on that Report. There would doubtless be legislation when the Liberal Party returned to power, but he wanted the present Government to get a share of the honour and glory. As they would not have the chance much longer, he urged them speedily to take up this Report and deal with it satisfactorily.

The depopulation of the Highlands was a very serious matter indeed. A great deal was heard of "Imperial policy." He was as Imperial as any "Imperialist;" he desired to see our great Empire maintained; but he wished the Government would make some Imperial experiments nearer home; our own people had the first claim to be looked after. The Highlanders were becoming poorer every year; large numbers had to seek parochial relief; and the taxation increased. If only the people were given access to the land, less of this wretched poverty would exist, and a fine, hardy race would grow up in thousands. That was a sad and unhappy state of things. The object of the House ought to be to keep the people in the country, whereas they had been driven off the land into the slums of the towns. The Highlands was the very place where the people ought to be kept as a nursery for the Army and Navy. The land ought to be distributed amongst those who want to use it. Let the Highlanders have the land, and provide them with technical education. This would give the population a chance of staying in their native land instead of devastating the country in order that deer might thrive. They had now a difficulty in getting recruits for the Army amongst the Highlanders, because, when they came back from the battlefield, they found their homes burned down and their parents turned out of doors. That was not the way to increase recruits for the Army. He implored the Government to do something to stay the extension of these deer forest areas, and they should give the authorities power to allocate land now used as deer forests for the people to live upon. Send the deer up on to the hills, and not down into the fertile valleys.

*MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness) said he desired to second the Motion of his hon. friend. During the last few days they had been discussing the problem of the unemployed, but the discussion had been confined very much to the question of the unemployed in our great towns. But they had also got an unemployed question in Scotland, and they were unemployed because they could not get an opportunity to work. There was plenty of land to be had, and plenty of men to till it, and yet the men could not be brought back to the land. There was a demand for small holdings in the Highlands, and yet they could not be obtained. The complaint in England was that they could not get people to go into the country to take up small holdings, but in the Highlands there were hundreds of people anxious, and willing, and able to take small holdings, and they could not get them. He did not entirely condemn deer forests, because they were in many places a benefit, for some of the land was suitable for nothing else; but where deer forests made it difficult to get small holdings, then he thought their existence constituted a national danger. The creation of sheep farms swept away the tenants and drove them down to the sea shore. Some of those who turned their estates into sheep farms are sorry that they turned off the tenants. Those sheep farms are now unlettable and, although deer forests are fashionable and popular at present, the time may come when they, too, will be unlettable; and there was a danger that in the future in some instances they might find the deer forests would be vast tracts of uninhabited land which could not be used either for holdings or deer forests. It was a great pity that the Highland population should not be encouraged to settle upon the land. It might be said that they could not prevent a man doing as he liked with his own, but this law had its limitations, and if they prevented a man getting a higher rent as a deer forest, there were ways of compensating him.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

"'And humbly to represent to Your Majesty that the present unrestricted extension of deer forests in the Highland crofting counties is detrimental to the welfare of the Highland population and Imperial interests, inasmuch as it renders more acute the difficulties which have so long existed in regard to the Highland land question; and seeing that the Royal Commission appointed in 1892 scheduled 1,782,785 acres of land in the crofting counties as capable of being cultivated to profit, or otherwise advantageously occupied by crofters or small tenants, this House is of opinion that steps should be taken with a view to admit of the ready acquisition of such of these lands as may be required for occupation by the people; and further, that the future extension of deer forests be subject to a Board, such as the Crofters Commission, with power to limit new deer forest areas to those lands only which are not suitable for cultivation or occupation by crofter tenants.'"—(*Mr. Weir.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY (The Lord-Advocate, Buteshire): It has been argued that the people of the Highlands should be able to get a living under proper economic conditions on the land of the Highlands, and that is what everyone would be glad to see attained. I confess that the hon. Member seems to me, in the course of his remarks, to have forgotten the precise terms of the Amendment he has moved, because it is really one which is strictly limited to the extension of deer forests, and that alone. The hon. Member argues that the extension of deer forests is detrimental to Imperial and local interests, and he tried to show the truth of his proposition by the startling method of reading the figures of the valuation made in successive years, showing that under the *régime* of which he complained the total rateable value had increased about three or four-fold. It is rather startling to be told that a state of things which has increased the valuation of the country four-fold is detrimental to local interests.

There is another matter in this connection. I think it is perfectly impossible that this increased money which is put into the Highlands does not do any local good, and I think the fancy picture of the Highland landlord who gets a large income from the deer forests and lives in London or Brighton is not at all in accordance with the facts. While fully recognising the great difficulties in connection with the settlement of some of the more congested districts of the Highland population, really this increase has nothing to do with the matter, and it does not enhance the difficulty. These particular lands, more than a century ago, were in the hands of small tenants. In recent years reafforestation has not been coupled with evictions, and the increase of afforestation has in no case turned what was arable land into grazing land. The only thing that has happened is that a certain number of sheep farms have been let to sporting tenants.

So far as these various Commissions which have been quoted by the hon. Member are concerned, their findings are entirely in favour of the deer forests from an economic point of view. There is no connection between the increase of afforestation and the question of getting extra land for those who are fit to take it. In the Crofters Act, which provides for the extension of holdings, although the extension of a holding cannot be made upon ground which is subject to an existing lease, there is a special exception if that lease is the lease of a deer forest, or a sporting lease of any description. In other words, a sporting lease or afforestation is no protection against the taking of ground for the extension of a holding, and whatever it may be proposed to do in future by way of taking land for the creation of holdings, it is neither here nor there whether the land is at the moment under deer or sheep. If you were proposing a measure which would more or less allow transfers from one person to another, there would be most probably a good deal less sympathy in favour of the sporting tenant than the sheep tenant, and the hon. Member, instead of finding himself in a worse position, would find himself in a better one if this land were afforested. I think that is an answer to the Amendment which is brought forward, and I do not propose to go beyond the terms of the Amendment and deal with the very much larger and more serious question as to how far it is possible by State aid and compulsory legislation to ameliorate the position of the people of the Highlands by the creation of new holdings, further than to say that my noble friend the Secretary for Scotland and myself are fully alive to the importance and the difficulty of the question of ameliorating the position of the people of the Highlands; but that question is not touched by this Amendment. The subject is one which has received the very careful attention of my noble friend in his capacity of Chairman of the Congested Districts Board, and his policy has often been before the House, although it has not always been approved of. I hope I have shown that this subject is not touched by the question of afforestation, and consequently no case has been made out, even upon economic merits, for the drastic remedy which the Amendment calls for—namely, that a man should not be allowed to clear his ground of sheep and put it under deer without first obtaining the sanction of the Crofters Commission.

*MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said this Motion raised a subject of great importance to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. The Highlands of Scotland had done a great deal for this country, and it was on this account that they were venturing to urge this Amendment upon the House. There was no doubt as to the facts which had been laid before the House. Reafforestation was going on year by year, and was increasing. That was a great wrong to the North where men had the capital, but could not get the land on any terms whatever. A distinguished colleague of the right hon. Gentleman had said that the crofters had been rack-rented and driven from their holdings to make way for deer forests; they had been charged rent on their improvements, and they had been reduced to misery and degradation. That was the opinion of the present Colonial Secretary. Anyone who had visited the Highlands and Islands knew that the people were suffering from the want of land. What they blamed the Government for was, that with all the power at their hands and all the resources of the Government, they had not put the law into an efficient state. It was nonsense to say that they did not know what the people wanted, for it was plain to anyone who went to Scotland that far too much land was in the hands of large sheep farmers and the deer forests.

*MR. BIGNOLD (Wick Burghs) said of the 1,700,000 acres of land scheduled by the Royal Commission of 1902, 1,600,000 acres were then, and were today, under sheep, cattle, and cultivation. The Report of the Commission referred, not to the deer forests alone, but also to the low ground. Out of his own estate in Scotland of 30,000 acres, only 256 acres were scheduled, whilst on the estate of Lord Tweedmouth not a single acre was scheduled. He yielded to no man in his desire to see the people restored to the straths and glens.

The House divided:—Ayes, 98; Noes, 158. (Division List No. 6.)

AYES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Ambrose, Robert
Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Burke, E. Haviland-
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Davies, M. Vaughan- (*Cardign*
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duffy, William J.
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Horniman, Frederick John
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, David B. (*Swansea*)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Law, H. Alex. (*Donegal, W.*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*
Morley, Charles (*Breconshire*)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, South*)
O'Brien, Kendal (*Tipper'ry Mid*
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Brien, William (*Cork*)
O'Connor, James (*Wicklow, W.*
O'Connor, T. P. (*Liverpool*)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (*Mayo, N.*)
O'Kelly, James (*Roscommon, N.*
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee James John
Palmer, Sir Charles M. (*Durham*
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Redmond, John, E. (*Waterford*)
Redmond William (*Clare*)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs*)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, S. M. (*Whitechapel*)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John

Mr. Cathcart Wason.

Thomas, Abel (*Carmarthen E.*)
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*)
Tully, Jasper
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*)
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Henry J. (*York, W.R.*)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Mr. Causton and Mr. Spencer.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, Sir Fras. T. (*Windsor*)
Beckett, Ernest William
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (*Middx.*)
Brown, Sir Alx. H. (*Shropsh.*)
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt Hn J A (*Glasg.*)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig, Charles C. (*Antrim, S.*)
Cranborne, Lord
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Davenport, William Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R. (*Tr. Haml'ts*
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Jos. C.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A Akers
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzroy, Hon. Edw. Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (*City of Lond*
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (*St. Albans*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Maj Evans- (*Tr. Hmlts*
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Groves, James Grimble
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir Alexander
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J. H. (*Dumf.*)
Middlemore, John T.
Mitchell, William
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, David J (*Walth'mst'w.*)
Morrison, James Archibald
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (*D'rlington*
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde (*Bethnal Green*
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. Edw. J.
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E H (*Sheffield*
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C E (*Taunton*
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (*Yorks.*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after half-past Five of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 23rd February, 1903.

ADDRESS.

The King's Answer to the Address of Tuesday last reported; and Address and Answer to be printed and published.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners, that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—

All Saints, Poplar (Rate Abolition).
Antrim, Down, Armagh, and Belfast Electric Power.
Aston Manor Improvement
Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Transfer).
Bangor Corporation.
Barnsley Corporation (Water).
Barry Railway.
Bath Corporation Water.
Beckenham Urban District Council.
Belfast Street Tramways.
Belfast Water.
Billingshurst and District Gas.
Birmingham Corporation.
Blackheath and Greenwich District Electric Light.
Bournemouth Corporation Tramways.
Bournemouth Gas and Water.
Bradford Corporation.
Bridgwater Gas.
Brighton Corporation.
Bristol Corporation.
Bristol, London, and Southern Counties Railway.
British Gas Light Company (Norwich).
Broadstairs Gas.
Burgess Hill and St. John's Common Gas.
Bury and District Joint Water Board.
Cardiff Railway.
Carmarthenshire Electric Power.
Castleblaney, Keady, and Armagh Railway (Extension of Time).
Central London Railway.
Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity.
Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway.
Cheltenham Improvement.
Cheshire Lines Committee.
City and North-East Suburban Electric Railway.
City and South London Railway.
Clapham Junction and Marble Arch Railway (No. 1).
Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power.
Commercial Gas.
Cork Harbour.
Coventry and Arley Railway.
Coventry Electric Tramways.
Crystal Palace District Gas.
Derby Gas.
Didcot, Newbury, and Southampton Railway.
Dover Corporation.
Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area).
Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford Railway.
Dudley, Stourbridge and District Tramways.
East Ardsley Gas.
East Ham Improvement.
Ebbw Vale Water and Improvement.
Erith Tramways and Improvement.
Exeter Corporation.
Exeter Railway.
Faversham Gas.
Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours.
Frinton-on-Sea Sea Defences.
Gas Light and Coke Company.
Gas Light and Coke Company's Acts Amendment.
Gateshead Corporation.
Gorleston and Southtown Gas.
Great Central Railway.
Great Eastern Railway (No. 1)
Great Eastern Railway (No. 2).
Great Northern and City Railway.
Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (New Lines and Extensions).
Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (Various Powers).
Great Northern Railway.
Great Southern and Western Railway.
Great Western Railway.
Great Western Railway (Pension Fund).
Grindleford, Baslow, and Bakewell Railway.
Hainault Forest.
Hampton Court Gas.
Harrogate Water.
Harrow and Stanmore Gas.
Hastings Harbour.
Hastings Harbour District Railway.
Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment).

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Hastings Tramways (Extensions).

Hexham Gas.

Highland and Invergarry and Fort Augustus Railway Companies. (*Substituted Bill.*)

Humber Commercial Railway and Dock.

Hyde Corporation.

Indiarubber, Guttapercha, and Telegraph Works Company.

Ipswich Gas.

Kent Water Board.

King's College, London.

Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation.

Knott End Railway (Extension of Time).

Lancashire and Yorkshire and London and North-Western Railways (Steam Vessels).

Leigh Corporation.

Lima Railways.

Liverpool University.

Llandrindod Wells Improvement.

London and North-Western Railway.

London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway.

London Building Acts (Amendment.)

London County Asylums (Receiving Houses).

London County Council (Electric Supply).

London County Council (General Powers).

London Hydraulic Power.

London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway.

London United Tramways.

Maidstone Gas.

Manchester Corporation.

Market Drayton Gas.

Maryport Harbour.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

Merthyr Tydfil Urban District Council.

Metropolitan District Railway (Works).

Middlesbrough Corporation.

Midland and Belfast and Northern Counties Railways.

Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland.

Midland Railway.

Milford Docks.

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway.

Nantwich Gas.

Nantwich Urban District Council.

Nantyglo and Blaina Water.

Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynamman Railway.

Nelson Corporation.

New Hunstanton Improvement.

Newcastle-on-Tyne Electric Supply.

North Cheshire Tramways.

North-Eastern Railways.

North Middlesex Gas.

North-Western Electricity and Power Gas.

North-West London Railway.

North's Navigation Collieries.

Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways.

Old Bridewell Burying Ground.

Oldham Corporation.

Pelican and British Empire Life Office.

Plymouth and Stonehouse Gas.

Plymouth Corporation.

Pontypridd Urban District Council.

Poole and District Electric Traction.

Port Talbot Railway and Docks.

Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage.

Rickmansworth Gas.

Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements.

St. Philip's Chapel (Regent Street).

Salford Corporation.

Scarborough Gas.

Scunthorpe Urban District Water.

Seaforth and Sefton Junction Railway.

Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation.

Shropshire, Worcestershire, and East Denbighshire Electric Power.

Sittingbourne District Gas.

Somerset and District Electric Power.

Southampton Harbour.

South-Eastern and London, Chatham and Dover Railways.

South Shields Corporation.

South Shields, Sunderland, and District Tramways.

South Wales Mineral Railway.

South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway.

South Yorkshire Joint Railways.

Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal.

Stoke Newington Borough Council.

Stroud District and Cheltenham Tramways.

Sutton Coldfield Corporation.

Sutton District Water.

Taff Vale Railway.

Thames Conservancy.

Thames Steamboat Trust.

Torquay Corporation Water.

Ulster and Connaught Light Railways.

Walker and Wallsend Union Gas.

Watford and Edgware Railway.

Wellingborough and District Tramroads.

Wellington (Salop) Gas.

West Bromwich Corporation.
West Cumberland Electric Tramways.
Western Trust.
Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board.
West Ham Corporation.
West Sussex Water.
Willesden Urban District Council.
Winchester Water and Gas.
Wirral Railway.
Wisbech Canal (Abandonment).
Wolverhampton and Cannock Chase Railway (Extension of Time).
Wood Green Urban District Council.
Woolwich Borough Council.
Worthing Corporation (Tramways).

And the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with—

Birmingham District Tramways.
Chatham and District Light Railways.
Croydon and District Electric Tramways.
Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways.
Hove, Worthing and District Tramways.
Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways.
Metropolitan District Railway (Various Powers).
Mid Yorkshire Tramways.
Sheffield Corporation.
Shepshed Urban District Council Gas.
South Lancashire Tramways.
South Staffordshire Tramways.
Strabane and Letterkenny Railway.
Thames Steamboat Service.
Tynemouth and District Tramways.
Wigan Corporation Tramways.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY.

State of the Six Army Corps Commands.

NAVY (MANŒUVRES.)

Narrative of the combined manœuvres by the Mediterranean, Channel, and Cruiser Squadrons, 1902.

CYPRUS.

Correspondence respecting the drought in Cyprus.

COLONIES (ANNUAL.

No. 381 Southern Nigeria; Report for 1901.

RAILWAYS

Report on a visit to America, 19th September to 31st October 1902, by Lieut.-Colonel H. A. Yorke, R.E., Chief Inspecting Officer of Railways, Board of Trade.

WAGES AND EFFECTS OF DECEASED SEAMEN.

Account of the sums received and paid in respect of the wages and effects of deceased seamen, in the year ended 31st March 1902.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

RAMSGATE HARBOUR.

Statement of the receipts and payments made by the Board of Trade for the year ended 31st March 1902; together with an account of the receipt and issue of stores.

TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANK.

Eleventh Annual Report of the Proceedings of the Inspection Committee of Trustee Savings Banks, for the year ended 20th November 1902; with appendices.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SHOPS (HOURS OF CLOSING) BILL [H.L.]

To be read 2^a on Tuesday the 3rd of March next.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 23rd February, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the List reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, the Standing Orders have been complied with in the following cases, viz. :—

All Saints, Poplar (Rate Abolition).
Antrim, Down, Armagh, and Belfast Electric Power.
Aston Manor Improvement.
Bangor Corporation.
Barry Railway.
Belfast Water.
Birmingham Corporation.
Bournemouth Corporation Tramways.
Bournemouth Gas and Water.
Bradford Corporation.
Brighton Corporation.
Bristol Corporation.
British Gaslight Company (Norwich).
Bury and District Joint Water Board.
Cardiff Railway.
Carmarthenshire Electric Power.
Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity.
Chatham and District Railways.
Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power.
Derby Gas.
Didcot, Newbury, and Southampton Railway.
Dudley, Stourbridge, and District Tramways.
Exeter Corporation.
Exeter Railway.
Faversham Gas.
Frinton-on-Sea Sea Defences.
Harrogate Water.
Harrow and Stanmore Gas.
Hastings Harbour.
Hastings Harbour District Railway.
Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment).
Hastings Tramways (Extensions).
Hexham Gas.
India Rubber, Gutta Percha, and Telegraph Works Company.
King's College, London.
Knott End Railway (Extension of Time).
Lima Railways.
Liverpool University.
London and North-Western Railway.
London, Brighton and South Coast Railway.
London County Asylums (Receiving Houses.)
Manchester Corporation.
Maryport Harbour.
Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.
Mid Yorkshire Tramways.
Milford Docks.
Nantwich Gas.
Nantwich Urban District Council.
North Cheshire Tramways.
North-Western Electricity and Power Gas.
North's Navigation Collieries,
Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways.
Old Bridewell Burying Ground.
Oldham Corporation.
Pelican and British Empire Life Office.
Plymouth and Stonehouse Gas.
Pontypridd Urban District Council.
Poole and District Electric Traction.
Port Talbot Railway and Docks.
Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage.
Rickmansworth Gas.
Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements.
St. Philip's Chapel (Regent Street).
Salford Corporation.
Scunthorpe Urban District Water.
Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation.
Shropshire, Worcestershire and East Denbighshire Electric Power.
Somerset and District Electric Power.
Southampton Harbour.
South-Eastern and London, Chatham and Dover Railways.
South Wales Mineral Railway.
South-Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway.
Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal.
Sutton Coldfield Corporation.
Taff Vale Railway.
Torquay Corporation Water.
Wellington (Salop) Gas.
West Bromwich Corporation.
Western Trust.
Willesden Urban District Council.
Wirral Railway.
Wisbech Canal (Abandonment).
Worthing Corporation (Tramways).

And that they have certified that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in the following cases, viz. :—

Birmingham District Tramways.

Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways.

Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways.

Shepshed Urban Distict Gas.

South Lancashire Tramways.

South Staffordshire Tramways.

Tynemouth and District Electric Tramways.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH.)

Mr SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—

Birmingham District Tramways [Lords].

Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways [Lords].

Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways [Lords].

Shepshed Urban District Gas [Lords].

South Lancashire Tramways [Lords].

South Staffordshire Tramways [Lords].

Tynemouth and District Tramways [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—

Croydon and District Electric Tramways.

Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways.

Metropolitan District Railway (Various Powers).

Sheffield Corporation.

Strabane and Letterkenny Railway.

Thames River Steamboat Service.

Wigan Corporation Tramways.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

The Deputy Chairman reported, That, after conferring with the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, for the purpose of determining in which House of Parliament the respective Bills should be first considered, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, they had determined that the Bills contained in the following List should originate in the House of Lords, viz. :—

Fife Electric Power Company.

Hamilton, Motherwell, and Wishaw Tramways (Part III).

Life Association of Scotland.

Scottish American Mortgage Company, Limited.

BROADSTAIRS GAS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. James Lowther and Mr. Kimber.

CITY AND SOUTH LONDON RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bond, Mr. Alban Gibbs, and Mr. David MacIver.

CRYSTAL PALACE DISTRICT GAS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Fortescue Flannery and Mr. Kimber.

DUBLIN IMPROVEMENT (BULL ALLEY AREA).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Field, Mr. Harrington, Mr. M'Cann, and Mr. Nannetti.

EAST HAM IMPROVEMENT.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. David Morgan and Mr. Louis Sinclair.

GAS LIGHT AND COKE COMPANY'S ACTS AMENDMENT.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Burns, Mr. Alban Gibbs, and Sir Joseph Dimsdale.

GREAT NORTHERN, PICCADILLY, AND BROMPTON RAILWAY (NEW LINES AND EXTENSIONS).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Henry Fowler, Mr. Alban Gibbs, and Mr. Whitmore.

GREAT NORTHERN, PICCADILLY, AND BROMPTON RAILWAY (VARIOUS POWERS).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Henry Fowler, Mr. Alban Gibbs, and Mr. Whitmore.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Fison and Sir Frederick Banbury.

HAINAULT FOREST.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. David J. Morgan and Mr. John Burns.

IPSWICH GAS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Charles Dalrymple and Mr. Goddard.

KENT WATER BOARD.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Griffith Boscawen and Sir Barrington Simeon.

LEIGH CORPORATION.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Scott and Mr. Cawley.

LLANDRINDOD WELLS IMPROVEMENT.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Alfred Thomas, Mr. Edwards, Lieutenant Colonel Pryce-Jones, and Mr. Charles Morley.

LONDON BUILDING ACTS (AMENDMENT).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Burns and Mr. Lough.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Burns, Mr. Sydney Buxton, and Mr. Lough.

LONDON, TILBURY, AND SOUTHEND RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Round and Major Banes.

MAIDSTONE GAS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Francis Evans and Colonel Warde.

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAY (WORKS).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Perks and Sir Charles Dalrymple.

MULLINGAR, KELLS, AND DROGHEDA RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Nolan, Mr. Hayden, and Mr. Patrick White.

NANTYGLO AND BLAINA WATER.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir William Harcourt and Mr. Charles Morley.

NEW HUNSTANTON IMPROVEMENT.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. George White and Mr. Hare.

STROUD DISTRICT AND CHELTENHAM TRAMWAYS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir John Dorington and Mr. Charles Allen.

WATFORD AND EDGWARE RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Halsey and Sir John Blundell Maple.

WESTERN VALLEYS (MONMOUTHSHIRE) SEWERAGE BOARD.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. M'Kenna, Mr. Samuel Evans, and Mr. Abel Thomas.

WEST SUSSEX WATER.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Emmott and Sir Joseph Leese.

WOOD GREEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Joseph Howard and Captain Balfour.

PETITIONS

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions, in favour: from Cambuslang; Currie; Coldingham; and, Lauder; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Holmfirth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION ACT, 1898.

Petition from Haslingden, against alteration of the Law without an inquiry by a Select Committee; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.

Copy ordered, "of Account showing the gross amount received and the gross amount expended in respect of the Telegraph Service, from the date of the transfer of the telegraphs to the State to the **31**st day of March, 1902 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 57, of Session 1902)."—(*Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*)

WAGES AND EFFECTS OF DECEASED SEAMEN.

Account presented, of the Sums received and paid in respect of the Wages and Effects of Deceased Seamen in the year ended 31st March 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAYS.

Copy presented, of Report on a visit to America, 9th September to 31st October, 1902, by Lieutenant Colonel H. A. Yorke, R.E., Chief Inspecting Officer of Railways, Board of Trade [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 19th February.—*Mr. Gerald Balfour*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 25.]

TRADE AND NAVIGATION.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 19th February.—*Mr. Gerald Balfour*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 26.]

RAMSGATE HARBOUR.

Copy presented, of Statement of the Receipts and Payments for the year ended 31st March, 1902, together with an Account of the Receipt and Issue of Stores [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 27.]

CYPRUS.

Copy presented, of Correspondence respecting the Drought in Cyprus [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).

Copy presented, of Colonial Report, No. 381 (Southern Nigeria, Annual Report for 1901) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (MILITIA TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS.)

Copy presented, of the Militia Training Return, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY.

Copy presented, of State of the Six Army Corps Commands [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

WOODS, FORESTS AND LAND REVENUES.

Abstract Accounts presented, for the year ended 31st March 1902, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 28.]

ARMY (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT).

Copy presented, of the Appropriation Account for 1901–2, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon, and upon the Store Accounts of the Army [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 29.]

TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS.

Copy presented, of Eleventh Annual Report of the Proceedings of the Inspection Committee for the year ended 20th November, 1902, with Appendices [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 30.]

CANCER (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Special Report on Cancer in Ireland, being a Supplement to the Thirty-eighth Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Marriages, Births, and Deaths in Ireland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARTHUR ALFRED LYNCH.

Return of certified copies of the indictment, conviction, and sentence of the Court in the case of "The King against Arthur Alfred Lynch," tried in the King's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice on the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd days of January, 1903, and of the Order of the Court giving effect to the conditional pardon granted to the said Arthur Alfred Lynch; and also a certificate from the Governor of His Majesty's Prison, at Brixton, that the said Arthur Alfred Lynch is held in custody by him in pursuance of the said Order.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): As an elector of the borough of Galway and the representative of a neighbouring constituency——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! This cannot be debated now. It is only a Motion for certain documents to be presented to the House as an unopposed Return. If any steps are taken on them, then will be the time to discuss the matter. This is merely an Order for certain documents to be laid so as to place the House in a position to take action.

COLONEL NOLAN: Of course, Sir, if you rule that by no means I can say a word on this, I will sit down. My contention is that the documents asked for are incomplete, and that presented in this form they may do an injury.

MR. SPEAKER: It will be open to the hon. and gallant Member to move for a further Return.

COLONEL NOLAN: On another occasion?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

COLONEL NOLAN: Then I will ask if the Government will agree to have included in this Order copies of the certificates of the sentences passed on the rebels at Natal and the Cape, and also similar certificates from the gaolers that these rebels are kept in custody.

MR. SPEAKER: That clearly would be a case for a separate Return. It is an argumentative matter, not material to this particular Motion.

COLONEL NOLAN: Then if that be your ruling, Sir, I will sit down.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Will due notice be given before the issue of the Writ is moved?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member had better put that Question in the ordinary way.

Motion for the Return was agreed to.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Workmen's Compensation Act—Master Potters' Scheme.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can give the House any information as to the working of the compensation scheme instituted by the master potters for injuries caused by lead, and alluded to in the arbitration on the Home Office rules; and whether His Majesty's Government have been informed by the Potters' Association of the progress of the scheme and of the extent to which masters and men have co-operated to make its advantages general.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) I am informed that seventy-two firms have joined the Potters' Assurance Association, and that three others are insured on the same lines in other ways. Most of these firms are of importance in the trade, and, as far as my information goes, the scheme appears to be working satisfactorily, with the exception that in eight factories, as I understand, the men have refused to submit to the medical examination which is an essential part of the scheme.

South Africa—Native Labour in the Mines.

MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government has given its assent to any scheme whereby, either by means of taxation or otherwise, Kaffirs are to be induced, by pressure from the Executive Government of the South African Colonies, to work in mines; whether the Government has given any assistance to the mine-owners in their efforts to procure Native labour from districts either within or without the area of His Majesty's dominions; whether, in either case, the Government has imposed on mine-owners any conditions of employment; if so, what those conditions are, and if they include a minimum rate of remuneration.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) No assent has been given by His Majesty's Government to any scheme enabling the Executive Government of the South African Colonies to put pressure upon Native labour; nor has any assistance been given to the mine-owners to procure Native labour, unless the Native Regulations are to be regarded in that light. For these Regulations I may refer the hon. Member to the Parliamentary Paper, Cd. 904.

Official Recognition of Postal Employees Associations.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): To ask the Postmaster General whether, in view of the fact that successive Postmasters General have declared that postal employees have the right to form defensive organisations, he will state if members of the Postal Telegraph Service who are also members of the Postal Telegraph Clerks' Association have the right to obtain the assistance of the officials of that Union at the time or during the progress of a case between the individual telegraphist and his superior officer, on matters affecting his emoluments or conditions of service.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) There is no objection to such assistance being sought, provided that official documents are not made public.

Elementary Education—Suggested Alteration in Physical Training.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he will consider the desirableness of replacing the recently issued Model Course of Physical Drill for Children by a course more suited to the needs of young children than the present compilation, which is prepared from the Soldiers' Drill Book.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The Board of Education have no present intention of replacing the Model Course of Physical Training. But they are considering the desirableness of issuing a kind of introduction to the Model Course, showing the steps by which the series of exercises in it may be progressively acquired. This will greatly assist the managers of the smaller schools in introducing it. I may remind the hon. Member that though the Board strongly advocate a uniformity of system, both in the interests of the teachers (on whom falls the burden of imparting the physical training) and in those of efficient instruction, they are prepared to consider (and have in many cases approved) alternative schemes having the same scope and aim as the Model Course.

Local Municipal Contractors as Members of Education Committees.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether it is the intention of the Department to issue any memorandum or instruction with regard to ex-officers and members of school boards whose services might be desired on the new education committees, but who hold contracts under local municipal authorities.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The Board of Education does not think it necessary to draw up any memorandum or instruction on the subject of disqualification for membership of committees under Section 17 of the Education Act. The cases referred to in the Question are governed by Section 17 (5), and are not affected by Schedule II. (9).

Indian Irrigation Commission Report.

MR. WYLIE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will say when the Report of the Commission on Irrigation will be presented to the House.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) The Government of India have been asked to send home 1,500 copies of the Report of the Irrigation Commission when it is completed and printed, and copies will be distributed to hon. Members as soon as possible after arrival.

French Bonds—Stamp Duties.

MR. STUART SAMUEL (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the French Government will require a stamp of 1 per cent. to be affixed to the new 2½ Consol Bonds to Bearer held in France when exchanged next April for the existing 2¾ Bonds, even when these latter already bear the full French stamp; and whether he will take steps to secure that the stamp may be transferred from the old Bonds to the new at a reduced charge, as was accorded to the French Government by the Inland Revenue in similar circumstances connected with the recent conversion of French 3½ Rentes into 3 per cent.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) I am in communication with the Foreign Office on this matter.

Licensing Act, 1902—Reduction of Licences.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, seeing that the new Licensing Act which lately came into force confers no new powers on magistrates in regard to the reduction in the number of licences in their districts, will he consider the advisability of intimating the present state of the law on the subject to licensing benches throughout the country.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) Before the new Act came into force I issued circulars showing what changes it made in the law. It was clear that the powers long possessed by licensing justices in regard to the refusal to renew licences were not increased by the Act; and I do not think that there is any further communication on the matter which I can properly address to the justices at the present time.

Ichthyological Committee—Recommendations.

MR. LAYLAND-BARRATT (Devonshire, Torquay): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has taken into consideration the recommendations of the Ichthyological Committee; and, if so, what steps he proposes to take to carry them into effect.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The Report is still under consideration.

Railway in Southern Persia.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will lay upon the Table the Treaty, Agreement, or Correspondence conferring on His Majesty's Government the right to construct a railway in the South of Persia when railways are constructed in the North of Persia.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) An assurance to this effect was given to His Majesty's Government during the reign of the late Shah and has since been confirmed. It would not be desirable to present the correspondence.

Ireland — Ancient Monuments — Hill of Tara.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any excavations are now going on upon the Hill of Tara in Ireland; whether the Hill, or part of it, is now being offered for sale; and whether His Majesty's Government, having regard to the historical and archæological interest of the Hill of Tara, will endeavour to have it brought within the operation of the Ancient Monuments Act, or to take such other steps as may be within their power to prevent the mounds and other characteristic features of the surface from being obliterated.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I am informed that excavations have not been resumed at Tara. The tenant's interest in that portion of the Hill where excavations formerly took place has recently been sold. The landlord's interest has not been sold. The monuments on the Hill are at present within the operation of the Ancient Monuments Act of 1882, to this extent, that the Commissioners of Public Works have power to proceed against any person, other than the owner, who injures or defaces the mounds. To restrain the owner, the guardianship of the mounds should be vested in the Commissioners. The owner has declined to take this step, and there is no power to compel him to do so. The Commissioners are watching this matter very closely, and will use every means in their power to strengthen the popular forces at work in order to prevent any resumption of excavation.

Crimes Act in Ireland—Case of Messrs. Lohan and Finnerty.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the cases of Messrs. Lohan, County Councillor, and Finnerty, District Councillor, who are still confined in Galway Prison; and whether in view of the fact that they were imprisoned in consequence of their endorsement of a speech delivered by the Member for East Galway who has been released, will he reconsider their case.

(*Answered to Mr. Wyndham.*) The persons named in the Question were not imprisoned for the reasons alleged. They were convicted (and the conviction was confirmed on appeal by the Recorder of Galway) of taking part in a criminal conspiracy. Their cases are under consideration.

Census of Ireland—Cost of Printing.

MR. M'KEAN (Monaghan, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the census printing for Ireland is now complete; and, if so, will he state what the cost of it has been.

(*Answered by Mr. Hayes Fisher.*) The printing for the Irish census, although in an advanced stage, is not yet complete, the "Typographical Index" being still in the press. I am not, therefore, as yet in a position to state the cost.

Volunteers for South Africa—Gratuities.

MR. MATTHEW RIDLEY (Stalybridge): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that men belonging to Volunteer regiments volunteered for active service in South Africa on the distinct understanding, given in Army Order 29 of 1902, Paragraph 12, that they would receive a gratuity of £5; and whether he will reconsider his decision that Army Order 87 of 1901, to which no reference was made in the Order under which the men enlisted, deprives them of the right to this gratuity; and whether he has any information as to the effect this decision has had on recruiting for the Volunteer forces.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) All the men who volunteered for service under Army Order 29 of 1902 were granted the war gratuity, except those who had already completed a period of service in South Africa and received a gratuity. The condition of this grant was that it should not be given twice to any individual. It is not apparent how this decision could have any effect on recruiting for the Volunteer forces; but if my hon. friend can show that there has been any breach of faith I will consider the question.

Service Dress for Volunteers—Government Grant.

MR. ERNEST FLOWER (Bradford, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is proposed to give any financial assistance to Volunteer Corps desirous of adopting the Service dress in addition to their present full dress.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) As the adoption of the Service dress is quite optional for the Volunteer Corps, there appears to be no sufficient reason for throwing any of the cost on the public funds.

British Army—Publication of Preliminary and Annual General Return.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Preliminary Return of the British Army and the Annual General Return, the publications of which, since 1899, have been suspended, will not again be presented to the House; and, if so, whether he proposes, in some other form, to provide similar information necessary to enable the House to know, before discussing Army Estimates, what has been the distribution, state, and condition of the Army during the preceding year.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The preliminary Return has been abolished. The general Return is being carefully compiled, but the difficulties of such compilation have proved considerable, and I fear no publication can be promised earlier than the beginning of April. The Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting, which will before long be published, will supply a considerable amount of information.

Garrison Regiments and Line Battalions —Relative Married Establishment.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state what is the married establishment of a battalion of the garrison regiment; and, if this is greater than the married establishment of a line battalion, what additional expense will this involve.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The question of fixing the married establishment of the garrison battalions is at present receiving careful consideration, and it is not possible to state the cost, but it will naturally be considerably in excess of that of a line battalion.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Co-ordination of Imperial Defence.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can arrange to give to the House any annual opportunity, in Supply or otherwise, of discussing such matters connected with the co-ordination of Imperial Defence as between the two Departments primarily charged with it as are not at present the subject of any Vote; for example, the dwindling of the garrison of so important a coaling station of the Fleet as Thursday Island.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): We cannot, I think, question the motive of the right hon. Baronet's Question, and I have some hesitation in answering it in the affirmative. There are two reasons. First of all, there are technical difficulties in the way, for the discussion, to all intents and purposes, would be a discussion in Supply not relevant to the particular Vote; but that reason might be got over if we were quite clear as to the question of policy. But my hesitation on the question of policy arises because the right hon. Gentleman proposes, in effect, that there should be an annual debate on the strategic position of the British Empire and the various ways in which we ought to distribute our Army in view of a possible combination against us. I am not sure that a debate of that kind in the House is really very useful. It is not merely the right hon. Gentleman who will have to exercise the right of giving his views on all these rather delicate national questions, but he would force the Government to make a reply. If the reply was a complete reply, which would suit all sections of the House, the Government would be compelled, I am afraid, to go into details which I do not think it is much to our advantage that we should discuss in the House. If we, on the other hand, were to be content with a fragmentary reply, it might be urged that we were glossing over the difficulty, and I do not know that the general gain would be great. As at present advised, I am not ready to assent to the request of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) asked if, when the re-organisation was complete, Papers would be laid setting forth the nature of the new Committee of Defence.

*MR SPEAKER: Order, order.! That does not arise out of the Question.

South African War—Medals for Kaffirs.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War on what grounds did Lord Kitchener base his request that 100,000 medals should be despatched to South Africa for presentation to Kaffirs who were engaged in the British service during the late war; whether General Lyttelton, now Commander of the Forces in South Africa, has presented some of the medals to Kaffirs, or has directed them to be presented to Kaffirs; and, if so, how many of those medals were presented; how many Kaffirs during the late war drew pay from military funds, and for what services was that pay drawn; and, seeing that the War Office authorities gave assurances that natives took no part in the late war, will he state what was the precise character of the administrative services for which medals for the natives were requested by Lord Kitchener.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I have no detailed information to enable me, in reply to the points raised by the hon. Member, to add to the information already given to him. The services on which the natives were employed were chiefly in connection with transport and supply, with intelligence work, and hospital services.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: But why were so many medals sent out?

MR. BRODRICK: The number of natives employed was very large.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will send a sample of the medals into the tea room for inspection by Members.

The Volunteer Force.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what is the diminution in the strength of the Volunteer force upon 31st January, 1903 compared to 31st October, 1901; and what is the deficiency of officers at the present time.

*MR. BRODRICK: The strength of the Volunteer force was, on the 31st October, 1901, 288,476; on 1st January, 1903, 250,990. The present deficiency of officers is 1,895. In estimating the diminution in the Volunteer force it should be remembered that the strength in 1899, and for many years previous, was only about 225,000, and that an abnormal number of enrolments took place in 1899–1900 (113,000), whose period of three years service expired in October last. A large number of Volunteers, who would have left the service in ordinary times during these three years, have also waited to take their discharge till the close of the war.

MR. ROBERT SPENCER (Northamptonshire, Mid): Is there any ground for the suggestion that the diminution occurred owing to the stringency of the new Regulations?

MR. BRODRICK: There is no doubt that stringency may have had some effect; but I am equally certain, seeing the Volunteer force was maintained before the excitement of the war at about 225,000, that ultimately the strength will revert to some such figure.

Cape Town—Alleged Military Scandal.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he has made inquiries with reference to the incident at Nelson's Hotel, Cape Town, on Christmas Eve, 1901, brought under his notice on the 8th August, 1902 by the hon. Member for South Donegal; and, if so, what has been the result of these inquiries, and what punishment, if any, has been inflicted on the officers concerned.

MR. BRODRICK: Yes, Sir, I have made full inquiries. The officers concerned were quartered in various parts of the world and had to be communicated with by letter, this not being a case in which explanations could be given by cable. The reports are as yet not all received, but the military authorities are losing no time in the investigation.

Salutes to the Secretary for War.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state in what capacity, whether civil or military, was he the recipient at Malta of a salute of seventeen guns; is there any precedent for the conferring of this mark of honour on any other Secretary of State for War; and on whom does the responsibility rest for its bestowal.

MR. BRODRICK: The Governor ordered the salute to be paid to the Secretary of State for War according to the established precedents. No other authority was needed or asked.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: If the Prime Minister had gone under similar circumstances, how many guns would have been fired?

Ministers as Company Directors.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he proposes to take any steps with reference to the unauthorised use of his name by the agents of the Rock Assurance Company as a director of that company in a trade advertisement in a newspaper at Johannesburg.

MR. BRODRICK: The necessary steps were taken as soon as my attention was drawn to the matter.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: What action will the right hon. Gentleman take? Will he resign his directorship?

No answer was given.

Mr. Brodrick's Visit to Malta—Inspection of Troops.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War in what capacity, civil or military, did he hold inspections of troops and review guards of honour at Malta; and whether he is aware that Colonel Stanley, who in 1878, as Secretary of State for War, inspected troops at Malta, had served in the Grenadier Guards, of which he was a captain, and was honorary Colonel of the King's Own Royal Lancaster Regiment.

MR. BRODRICK: I have already told the hon. Member that the inspection was held by the Governor. I have no information as to whether Colonel Stanley inspected the troops at Malta in 1878.

Navy Ships' Stores.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether officers in the Navy are permitted to spend their own money on services connected with their ships.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): It is the policy of the Admiralty to provide for the supply of all stores necessary for the maintenance, upkeep, and decoration of ships, and the regulations are framed with the object of giving effect to that policy. It is necessary from time to time to review the issues of stores referred to, and at the present time the question of whether the supply is in all cases adequate is under consideration. Officers are not prohibited from spending their own money on services connected with their ships, but the practice is not encouraged.

Australasian Squadron.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the new agreement relating to the Australasian Squadron has yet been ratified by the Governments concerned.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The agreement cannot be ratified until it has been approved by the Federal Parliament of Australia and the Parliament of New Zealand, which are not yet in session.

Alaskan Boundary Tribunal.

MR. ROSE (Cambridgeshire, Newmarket): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether, in the selection of members of the Alaskan Boundary Tribunal, care will be taken that the names of the gentlemen to be appointed by His Majesty's Government are submitted to and receive the approval of the Government of the Dominion of Canada.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E., for Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN): The British members of the Alaskan Boundary Tribunal will be selected in consultation with the Dominion Government.

Australian Sugar Bounties.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Postmaster General, as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, can he state the effect of the law in the Australian Commonwealth with reference to public loans or guarantees relating to sugar manufactures or refineries, or to rebates on sugar grown within the Commonwealth, and also with reference to fiscal advantages of any other kinds granted thereby to growers or manufacturers of sugar; and will he inquire as to the communication made by the Premier of New South Wales, protesting against New South Wales having to bear the cost of a rebate on sugar, and lay upon the Table the text of that communication.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The laws of Queensland and Victoria authorise the Governments of those States to make advances under clearly defined conditions to sugar manufacturers for establishing and improving sugar works. No other fiscal advantages are granted. Copies of the laws can be supplied to the hon. Member if he desires it. With regard to rebates on sugar grown within the Commonwealth, all such sugar, in the production of which only white labour is employed, is entitled to a rebate of 2s. per cwt. of the Excise duty, which is 3s. per cwt. I will inquire as to the communication made by the Premier of New South Wales, to which the hon. Member refers.

Southern Nigeria.

MR. EMMOTT (Oldham): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether Sir Frederick Lugard intends to send a military expedition to Sokoto before the Delimitation Commission commences its work: and whether any military operations are in progress or in contemplation in Southern Nigeria at the present time; and, if so, for what purpose.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The British Commissioners met the French Commissioners at Junju on the 6th instant, and the Commission has now probably begun its work. The questions whether the force which has occupied Kano will proceed to Sokoto, and, if so, when, depend upon the local, political, and military situation, but Sir F. Lugard has authority to send a force to Katsena, and, if necessary, to Sokoto. Beyond the patrolling of certain unsettled districts, no military operations are in progress or in contemplation in Southern Nigeria.

MR. EMMOTT: Has the right hon. Gentleman seen the report in the *Morning Post* as to certain expeditions into Southern Nigeria? Is it correct?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I can give the hon. Gentleman no information beyond that I have just read.

Brussels Sugar Convention.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, have His Majesty's Government, since the signature on 5th March, 1902, of the Brussels Sugar Convention, had any correspondence with, or received any communication from, any of the signatory Powers relative to Great Britain's obligation under Article IV. to impose countervailing duties on sugar-sweetened products imported from her self-governing Colonies, when such Colonies grant direct or indirect bounties on the production or exportation of those products; if so, from what Powers have communications been received; and when does he propose to lay them upon the Table of the House, or to state the effect of such verbal communications.

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): I would, in the first place, refer my hon. friend to my answer on the 17th December last. On January 13th His Majesty's Government despatched a circular informing the Powers signatory to the Convention that they would not consent under any circumstances to be bound to penalise bounty fed sugar imported into the United Kingdom from any of the self-governing British Colonies, and that they were not prepared to accept any reference of this Question to the Permanent Commission. We have received official replies from the German and Austrian Governments only. The German Government differ from us and reserve their liberty of action, but consider that the difference of opinion has no practical significance. The Austrian Government have said that they presume that in practice the case contemplated will not arise, but that they reserve their full liberty of action. The Dutch Government have sent no reply. The Italian Government, we understand, do not dispute our view. The Belgian Government consider the point of no practical interest. The French Government have expressed no opinion on the subject. Our ratification has been deposited on the express condition that we shall not be bound to penalise bounty-fed sugar from our self-governing Colonies. We have therefore incurred no treaty obligation to do so. Papers are being prepared and will shortly be laid upon the Table.

The Dardanelles.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, do the treaties still exist of 13th March, 1871, and of 30th March, 1856, whereby the Great Powers of Europe affirmed and engaged to respect the principle invariably established as the ancient rule of the Turkish Empire, in virtue of which it has at all times been prohibited for the ships of war of Foreign Powers to enter the Straits of the Dardanelles or the Bosphorus; have any, and, if so, how many, Russian torpedo destroyers or other ships of war recently entered and passed both those Straits, and when; were any, and, if so, what communications on the subject received by His Majesty's Government either from Russia or from Turkey before the passage of those ships; were any representations, verbal or written, made by His Majesty's Government; has any correspondence passed on the subject either before or after such passage; and, if so, when will he lay it upon the Table of the House.

* LORD CRANBORNE: The provisions of the Treaties of 1856 and 1871 relating to the Straits are still in force. His Majesty's Government have been informed that four Russian torpedo-boats passed through the Straits on various dates between December 31st and January 30th last; they were to fly the commercial flag and they were not to carry cannon or war material. No communications on the subject were received by His Majesty's Government from the Governments of Russia or Turkey before the passage of the vessels. In accordance with the course pursued on previous occasions His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on January 1st addressed a Note to the Porte in which he stated that the permission granted was in contravention of existing Treaty stipulations, and pointed out that, as these stipulations were applicable to all Powers alike, His Majesty's Government must reserve to themselves the right to claim similar privileges in the future. No reply has been returned to this Note by the Turkish Government. It is not considered desirable to present Papers on the subject.

American Claims against Venezuela.

SIR CUTHBERT QUILTER (Suffolk, Sudbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether he has any official information showing that the claims of American citizens against Venezuela are to be paid in full forthwith in gold or its equivalent, while those of British subjects will have to wait the decision of the Hague Tribunal.

LORD CRANBORNE: Our information is to the effect that the American claims will be dealt with by the Tribunal at the Hague.

Russian Commercial Treaty with Persia.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether a Commercial Treaty has been recently concluded between Persia and Russia; whether, under the provisions of that Treaty, duties so high as to be practically prohibitive have been imposed on Indian teas imported into Persia; and what steps His Majesty's Government have taken to protect British trade in Persia.

LORD CRANBORNE: The answer to the first Question is in the affirmative. Although, as I stated last night, this Commercial Treaty is likely to affect British trade injuriously in certain respects, we have no reason to believe that it will have anything like the effects which the hon. Gentleman suggests. A large part of the Indian tea used in Persia is imported through Russia, and it is not likely that the tariff will prove to be prohibitive as regards this particular article. Great Britain is at present entitled only to "Most-Favoured-Nation" treatment in Persia, but His Majesty's Minister at Teheran has been instructed to obtain an arrangement with the Persian Government under which this country will, for the future, have a more influential voice in regard to alterations in the tariff affecting British trade. I hope shortly to be in a position to make a further statement on the subject.

British Trade with Cuba.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any agreement or arrangements have been concluded between the Governments of Cuba and of the United States regulating the conditions of commerce between the two States and the Customs duties thereon; if so, whether His Majesty's Government can state the effect of such agreement upon British commerce, and can lay upon the Table the text thereof; and have His Majesty's Government received any, and, if so, what, representations on the subject from British trading interests.

LORD CRANBORNE: A Convention between Cuba and the United States has been signed, but has not yet been ratified. It would therefore be premature to consider the question of laying it before Parliament. The Convention is a reciprocity Convention giving exclusive advantages to the trade between the two countries, and must necessarily be to some extent disadvantageous to the trade of other countries. His Majesty's Government have received representations as to the adverse effect which the Convention would produce upon British commerce with the Island of Cuba.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Is it not the fact that this Convention places British commerce at a disadvantage of from 25 per cent. to 30 per cent. in Cuba?

LORD CRANBORNE: I do not think so, but if the hon. Member will put down a Question I will try and get the information.

Foreign Trawlers in the Moray Firth.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the resolution which was carried at Christiania in 1901 to the effect that no trawlers should be allowed to operate in areas, such as the Moray Firth, which have been closed for scientific purposes; and will he consider the expediency of communicating with the Foreign Powers concerned, with a view to the Moray Firth, which is already closed against British trawlers, being also closed against foreign trawlers.

The following Questions on the same subject also appeared on the Paper:—

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he proposes to take diplomatic action in the direction indicated by the Reports of the Delegates from Great Britain to the International Council on Sea Fisheries in 1901 and 1902, for the purposes of protecting from foreign trawlers areas in British territorial waters, such as the Moray Firth, reserved for purposes of scientific experiment in the interest of fisheries.

LORD CRANBORNE: I propose to answer both Questions together. I am quite aware that a resolution to the effect stated was passed at the Fishery Conference in question, but I fear that the time has not yet arrived when a proposal of the kind would meet with such general acceptance as would effectively exclude all trawlers, whatever flag they might fly, from visiting the Moray Firth. The Secretary of State is, however, now considering certain suggestions which may lead to a practical solution of the difficulties which form the chief subject of complaint.

Export Duty on Coal—Patent Fuel.

*MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, when it can be shown that small coal used in the manufacture of patent fuel contains nut coal of a value that would, if taken out, leave the remaining small of a value not exceeding 6s. per ton, the fuel is exempt from the export duty on coal; and, if so, why the duty is imposed on similar small coal when exported in an unmanufactured state.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): It is not the fact that fuel is exempted from the export duty on coal if it is shown that the small coal used in its manufacture contains nut coal of a value that would, if taken out, leave the remaining small of a value not exceeding 6s. per ton. But if the nuts actually have been screened out of coal which originally exceeded 6s. per ton in value, and have been sold for a price which reduces the average value of the residue to 6s. per ton or less, rebate of duty is allowed on such residue, whether used in the manufacture of fuel which is exported, or exported separately.

Export Duty on Coke.

*MR. D. A. THOMAS: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the export duty of one shilling per ton imposed on coke practically amounts to a duty of only three-fifths of a shilling on the coal used in its manufacture; and, if so, will he state the principle upon which coal used in the manufacture of other kinds of fuel is charged the full shilling duty.

MR. RITCHIE: (1) By Section 3 (5) of the Finance Act, 1901, coke, culm, and cinders are included under coal, and are, therefore, charged with a duty of 1s. per ton on exportation, if exceeding 6s. a ton free on board, without any reference to quantity of coal used in their production. I cannot say whether, as implied in the Question, five tons of coal are, on the average, required to produce three tons of coke, as I am informed that the yield of coke from coal varies considerably. (2) The coal used in the manufacture of ' other kinds of fuel —*e.g.*, patent fuel, is charged with duty when present in the fuel exported and exceeding 6s. a ton in fee on board value, because Section 7 of the above mentioned Act so directs. The hon. Member appears to suggest that duty ought to be charged on all the coal used in the manufacture of exported coke. I do not think this would be equitable, for the coke represents only a by-product of the coal, the remainder having been extracted as gas. Both coke and patent fuel are dutied on the quantity of the dutiable article exported, and so far on the same principle.

Income Tax Demands—P. O. Surcharges.

SIR BARRINGTON SIMEON (Southampton): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he will explain why an application for Income Tax marked O.H.M.S. is surcharged 2d. when forwarded by post to an address other than that to which it was originally directed, considering that if it had been originally sent with a penny stamp, and without the letters O.H.M.S. on the envelope, it would have been redirected and forwarded without any such surcharge.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I shall be glad if my hon. friend will send me the envelope so as to enable me to make further inquiry.

Public House Licences.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his attention has been called to the refusal by certain petty sessional courts to renew the licences of publicans against whom no complaint had been made of misconduct; and whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce legislation which will prevent such action taking effect until the question of compensation has been dealt with by Parliament.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): At the same time may I ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, having regard to the instances in the United Kingdom in which licensed victuallers who have spent considerable sums of money in the acquisition of their premises have been deprived of their licences through no fault of their own in either the conduct or management of their business, will he state whether he can see his way to introduce legislation such as will admit of compensation being granted in all cases in which the magistrates withhold the renewal of a licence on the ground that a reduction in the number of licences in the district is desirable.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): Though my attention has been called to this matter I have no information as to the actual results of the present licensing sessions, but assuming that the facts are as indicated in the Questions, I must point out that it has long been clear by well-known legal decisions that the renewal of a licence may be refused for reasons other than misconduct, *e.g.* for the reason that the justices in their discretion do not think that the licence is required. I can give my hon. friends the numbers refused for this reason in four years since 1890 if they so desire. That discretion must of course (to use the words of the Lord Chancellor in his judgment on the case of Sharp *v.* Wakefield) be exercised "judicially," and what has to be done must be done "according to the rules of reason and justice and not according to private opinion. It is to be not arbitrary, vague and fanciful, but legal and regular, and it must be exercised within the limit to which an honest man competent to the discharge of his office ought to confine himself." If it should appear that the justices are acting otherwise, it would certainly be a matter of gravity; but I do not think that we are yet in possession of sufficient information as to the facts to enable us to form an opinion. I will call for a full return directly the sessions are closed.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Will the right hon. Gentleman send a circular to the magistrates, setting forth the admirable opinion of the Lord Chancellor as to their duties in the matter?

*SIR THOMAS DEWAR: Is the recent action of the magistrates in any way connected with the Licensing Act of last year?

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: That Act confers no new powers on justices with respect to the refusal of licences.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: I suppose the right hon. Gentleman will obtain the information in sufficient time to enable appeals to be entered?

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: It will be given as soon as the Brewster Sessions are over.

MR FLOWER (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the action of the licensing justices throughout the country in refusing, or in declaring their intention to refuse, the renewal of licences, is in consequence of any instructions issued by Government?

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: No, Sir; the justices are acting in this matter, as they must do, on their own discretion; and the Government have no authority to issue instructions to them.

Atlantic Shipping Combine.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, in reference to the agreement proposed to be made by them with Mr. Pierpont Morgan's Shipping Trust, now known as the International Mercantile Marine Company, will they afford this House any opportunity of expressing an opinion on that agreement before it is finally concluded.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I must remind the hon. Member that the general lines of the agreement have been settled and accepted by both parties, and that the Government cannot treat them as open to re-consideration.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Who are the parties?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Government on the one hand and the Atlantic Combine on the other.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Then will the House have no opportunity of considering the question?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Oh yes, when the Papers are laid on the Table.

Port of London—Inspection of Food Imports.

MR. D. J. MORGAN (Essex, Walthamstow): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that articles of food imported into London, and landed at the wharves on the river side, are not subject to inspection by the officers of the Port Sanitary Authority of the Port of London; and whether he will consider the advisability of issuing an order giving to the Port Sanitary Authority jurisdiction over all wharves abutting upon the Port of London, whether on the River Thames or within the area of any dock.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N. R., Thirsk): My attention has been called to the matter referred to, and I am now considering the issue of an Order dealing with it.

Sergeant Hyde, Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork Co., N. E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state whether an inquiry has yet been held into the charge made against Sergeant Hyde of supplying false information with regard to the action of the police at Glenville, on the 23rd of November, in preventing persons attending an ordinary meeting of the United Irish League, and imprisoning those who did attend by fastening the door of the League room; whether his attention has been directed to the proceedings taken against Sergeant Hyde before the magistrates at Rathcormac on the 23rd of December and their decision; and what is the result of any inquiry made into all the circumstances of this case.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): Yes, Sir. The sergeant was reduced, as a result of the inquiry held, to the rank of constable. He was fined for assault at the Petty Sessions mentioned. He has since retired from the force.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Has this man a pension for his "deserving" services?

MR. WYNDHAM: He has a pension.

Land Purchase in Queen's County—Mr. Walker's Farm at Towlerton.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Land Commission considered they had sufficient security when sanctioning an advance for the purchase of Mr. John Walker's farm at Towlerton, Queen's County, by the occupier from the representatives of the late Mr. Edge; has the security depreciated since then; and, if not, will he explain on what grounds the Land Commission refuse to sanction sale of the occupiers' interest in the holding, and demand a fine of £50 from the purchaser.

MR. WYNDHAM: I would refer the hon. Member to a reply to a Question put on this matter on the 18th December last. The application made to the Commissioners in this case was one in reference to which they exercised the discretion vested in them by Statute, upon a full knowledge of all the facts. It would be contrary to practice to discuss their decisions in the manner now suggested.

Imprisonment for Contempt of Court—M'Elligott's Case.

MR. MCGOVERN (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that a man named M'Elligott from near Bawnboy, County Cavan, has been confined in Dundalk Gaol during the past nineteen months for refusing to give possession of his farm to the Irish Land Commission at £60 less than he could get from a solvent purchaser; and will the Government introduce a Bill to amend the law relating to contempt of court, in order to prevent people being confined for indefinite periods for offences of this description.

MR. WYNDHAM: The nature of the contempt in respect of which this man was committed to prison by the Master of the Rolls, was stated in my answer to the hon. Member's similar Question of the

20th March last. The Executive has no power to interfere in such cases. The reply to the second part of the Question is in the negative.

MR. McGOVERN: Does the right hon. Gentleman intend to keep this man permanently in prison?

Irish Royal College of Science—Lecturer in Organic Chemistry.

MR. McKEAN (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been drawn to the circumstances under which a recent appointment has been made to a vacancy in the position of Lecturer in Organic Chemistry at the Royal College of Science in Ireland; whether he is aware that the Assistant Secretary to the Technical Instruction Department of the Board of Agriculture conferred the position on a gentleman who only became a candidate for it at the solicitation of the Department; and will he explain why another candidate, of at least equal qualifications, who is an Irishman residing in Ireland, a Roman Catholic, and graduate and Fellow of the Royal University of Ireland, and who was, in addition, recommended by the gentleman who obtained the appointment, was passed over.

MR. WYNDHAM: The gentleman selected for this appointment, which was made by the Department, is an Irishman. He has had considerable experience as a lecturer.

Rural Libraries (Ireland) Act.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction or the Congested Districts Board propose to encourage the adoption of the Rural Libraries Act by a grant to those district councils which have already adopted, or may adopt, the Act in the future.

MR. WYNDHAM: Both Departments afford aid to village and working-men's libraries in the purchase and selection of books. The Department of Agriculture has also at present under consideration further proposals framed with the view of promoting the adoption of the Act by rural district councils.

Liscannar Harbour.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when the improvement of Liscannar Harbour, as provided for in the Marine Works (Ireland) Act, is likely to be carried out.

MR. WYNDHAM: In addition to this Question, I have received many communications from the hon. Member for West Clare, in whose constituency Liscannar is situate. The plans are now completed, and, after conferring with representatives of the County Council on the 28th inst., I trust that there may be no cause for delay.

Irish Proclaimed Districts.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will give the names of the counties and districts in Ireland which still remain proclaimed under the provisions of the Criminal Law and Procedure Act.

MR. WYNDHAM: The counties of Cavan, Clare, Cork, Galway, King's, Leitrim, Limerick, Longford, Mayo, Queen's, Roscommon, Sligo, Tipperary, Waterford, and Westmeath, and the county boroughs of Cork, Dublin, Limerick and Waterford, are still subject to the provisions of the Act in respect of special juries and changes of venue. The summary jurisdiction clause of the Act has been withdrawn from portions of ten counties and from three county boroughs, and remains in force in portions of five counties—Clare, Limerick, Roscommon, Sligo and Tipperary.

MR. DELANY: What is the reason for maintaining these proclamations?

MR. WYNDHAM: The same as induced the original order, I presume.

Religious Disturbances at Thurles.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, a short time ago, a Nonconformist church in Thurles, County Tipperary, was broken into, the harmonium smashed, bibles torn up, and the whole church saturated with paraffin oil and set on fire; and if he will state how many arrests were made.

MR. WYNDHAM: No arrests have yet been made in connection with this dastardly occurrence—none the less regrettable because it is most uncommon in Ireland.

Irish Land Conference Report.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will print and circulate the Report of the Irish Land Conference as a Parliamentary Paper.

MR. WYNDHAM: I propose to lay Papers on some aspects of the land purchase question, including a Report on the present condition of past purchasers. I will consider the desirability of adding this Report, although, of course, it is in no sense an official document, and indeed derives its interest from that fact.

Prosecution under the Crimes Act—Disqualified Councillors.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of county rural district and urban councillors and Poor Law guardians respectively, who have been disqualified within the past twelve months in Ireland in consequence of sentences of imprisonment with hard labour having been passed upon them under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; and whether he proposes to introduce legislation to remove such disqualification.

MR WYNDHAM: The number of cases of the kind mentioned was fourteen. In answer to the concluding inquiry I would refer to my reply to the similar Question addressed to me on the 22nd October last.

Dr. Long.

*MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in Limerick on 14th January last the driver of a car refused to drive Dr. Long to attend a patient; and that he was stoned after leaving divine service on Sunday 15th instant; and will he state what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

MR WYNDHAM: The reply to the first inquiry is in the affirmative. The police have no power to prosecute for the offence of refusing to drive a fare. With respect to the occurrence on the 15th instant, I am informed that a number of little boys were playing football, and that a stone was thrown from their direction in that of Dr. Long. He was not struck or otherwise stoned, nor do the police consider that there was any intention to strike him.

Belfast Betting Prosecution.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a man named McDuff, who was convicted and fined in Belfast for keeping an illegal betting house, made application through his solicitor to have his books and papers, which were seized by the police, given back to him, which the magistrates refused; and will he explain by whose orders and on what grounds an order was sent from Dublin Castle to hand them back.

MR. WYNDHAM: The magistrates made no order in respect to either the detention or return of these books and papers. There was no clause of forfeiture in the Statute and it would have been unjustifiable on the part of the police to have retained them. Directions for their return were consequently given.

Dublin Post Office—Split Duty Grievance.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he is aware that the nine clear hours at home recommended by the Tweedmouth Commission has not yet been carried into effect in Dublin; and whether, if there is no reasonable hope that it will be carried out, the Postmaster General could see his way to make some pecuniary grant to the Dublin staff in lieu thereof.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I am sorry to find that there are still eight officers in the parcel office who have not received the benefit of a clear nine hours' interval at home. I have given renewed stringent instructions on the subject.

Dublin Post Office—Stamping Duties.

MR. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he is aware that stamping is largely done by sorting clerks and telegraphists at Dublin, while in other large centres, such as Glasgow, stamping is entirely confined to postmen; and can he say whether stamping comes under the strict limit of a sorting clerk's duty, and, if not, will he see that it is done by the proper officers.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: It is not correct to say that the stamping of correspondence at Dublin is largely done by sorting clerks and telegraphists. The duty is mainly performed by postmen, but three sorting clerks and telegraphists are allotted to stamp the correspondence posted by Government Departments, and junior sorting clerks and telegraphists assist in the stamping of the ordinary correspondence when there is unusual pressure of work. Such work, although assigned to postmen, when the interests of the business require it is work which is also proper to sorting clerks and telegraphists and in which they have to qualify.

Pay of Irish Telegraph Learners.

MR. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he is aware that learners in many English post offices, such as Manchester, Leeds, and Sheffield, are paid at the rate of 8s. weekly, and on appointment get 16s. per week, and that the rates of pay throughout Ireland for persons holding the same rank are 6s. and 12s. respectively, and whether, seeing that the cost of living in the large towns in Ireland is at least as great as that in some of the English centres where the higher rate of pay is given, will he consider the advisability of granting the same wages in Ireland as he does under similar circumstances in England.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Wages of 8s. a week for learners with 16s. a week on appointment as sorting clerk and telegraphist were introduced as a temporary measure at certain English offices where a difficulty was experienced in obtaining the necessary number of candidates. The ordinary wages are found to be sufficient in Ireland to attract the required candidates; and it is not proposed to increase them.

MR. NANNETTI: Will the right hon. Gentleman give me a copy of these answers?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes; but if the hon. Gentleman when he wishes for a copy of the reply will put down his Questions as unstarred that will serve his purpose, as copies are supplied with the Parliamentary Papers.

Tory Island Cable.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can now state what decision has been arrived at with reference to the repair of the Tory Island Cable.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have been informed by my right hon. friend the Postmaster General that arrangements are being made by his Department for taking over the Tory Island Cable, and that it is intended to repair the cable as soon as circumstances admit.

International Automobile Race.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the desire in Ireland that the International Automobile Race should be run in that country, and considering that the local councils through whose districts the cars will speed are prepared to take every precaution for the safety of life, he will introduce a Bill to enable the competitors to hold the race in Ireland.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers this Question, may I ask is His Majesty's Government aware that this is a rare occasion on which the whole of the Irish people are at one? Taking this fact into consideration, will His Majesty's Government give a favourable reply to the Question? (Laughter.)

MR. WYNDHAM: I agree that my hon. and gallant friend is to-day speaking for the whole of Ireland. I understand that a Bill has been drafted by the hon. Member for the New Forest Division of Hants. In view of the unanimous desire of all the local bodies representing districts through which the proposed course would run, and also, I believe, of all hon. Members of Irish constituencies, I venture to express the hope that such a Bill would pass as an unopposed measure.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): Will the Government make the Bill their own, and thus secure for it the advantages of such a measure?

Mr. WYNDHAM: I do not like to contemplate the possibility of other hon. Members opposing this measure when it is brought forward unanimously on the part of Ireland. I hope it will pass by consent.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: But there are other Bills in front of it.

Mr. WYNDHAM: Still, I hope it will pass by consent. No one can be opposed to it.

Irish University Education Commission.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the final Report of the Royal Commission on University Education in Ireland will be presented to the House.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed by the Secretary of the Commission that the Report will be ready in the first week in March.

Marine Insurance Bill.

Mr. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if it is the intention of the Government to reintroduce the Marine Insurance Bill at an early date.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Lord Chancellor hopes to reintroduce the Bill at an early date. I believe it is a measure that is much needed, and that it is practically agreed to by the important commercial interests concerned.

Commissioners of Woods and Forests—Grants to Denominational Schools.

Mr. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether steps have yet been taken to discontinue the grants hitherto made by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests to 104 denominational schools; and whether he can yet inform the House whether there is any other national Department that contributes in the same manner to denominational schools.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: These grants will be continued up to the appointed day. After the appointed day, the continuation of these grants will be limited to the question of repairs; and the basis of any contribution, if contribution is to be made, is a matter which cannot yet be determined. As to the last part of the Question, I have no information about other Departments, but there would be no objection to a Return if the hon. Member will move for it.

DISTRIBUTION OF PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office why it is that the White Paper dealing with the distribution of the six Army Corps has been sent to the newspapers and not distributed to the Members of the House.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I am afraid I cannot answer the Question, as I have been away for the last three days, and am not aware of the circumstances under which it was communicated to the newspapers.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Does this come under the Betrayal of Official Secrets Act?

No answer was returned.

NEW BILLS.

SMALL HOLDERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To extend to tenants of small holdings the benefits of the Crofters (Scotland)

Acts," presented by Mr. Black; supported by Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Weir, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. J. D. Hope, and Mr. Harmsworth; to be read a second time on Friday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 39.]

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1897) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Congested Districts (Scotland) Act, 1897, and to enlarge the powers conferred under that Act," presented by Mr. John Dewar; supported by Mr. Thomas Shaw, Mr. Weir, and Mr. Cathcart Wason; to be read a second time tomorrow, and to be printed. [Bill 40.]

MEDICAL ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Medical Acts, 1858 to 1886," presented by Sir John Batty Tuke; supported by Sir John Gorst, Mr. James Campbell, Sir Richard Jebb, Mr. Talbot, and Sir Michael Foster; to be read a second time upon Friday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 41.]

LEASEHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

"To enable certain Leaseholders to become Freeholders," presented by General Laurie; supported by Mr. Spear, Mr. Cohen, and Sir George Fardell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 42.]

COLONIAL MARRIAGES BILL.

"To legalise certain Colonial Marriages," presented by General Laurie; supported by Mr. Rothschild, Mr. Arthur Stanley, Sir Gilbert Parker, and Captain Jessel; to be read a second time upon Friday, 12th June, and to be printed. [Bill 43.]

MEDICAL ACT (1858) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Medical Act of 1858," presented by General Laurie; supported by Mr. Rothschild, Sir Howard Vincent, Mr. Middlemore, and Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 44.]

MEDICAL ACT (1886) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Medical Act of 1886," presented by General Laurie; supported by Mr. Rothschild, Sir Howard Vincent, Mr. Middlemore, and Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 45.]

MINES EIGHT HOURS BILL.

"To limit the hours of underground workers in Mines to Eight Hours per day from bank to bank," presented by Mr. Ellis Griffith; supported by Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), Mr. Pickard, Mr. Joseph Walton, Mr. Thomas Bayley, Mr. Jacoby, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Hatch, Mr. William Jones, and Sir Albert Rollit; to be read a second time upon Friday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 46.]

LEASEHOLDERS (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) BILL.

"To give facilities to Leaseholders for the purchase of the Fee Simple of their holdings," presented by Mr. Kearley; supported by Mr. Emmott, Sir William Holland, Mr. William M'Arthur, Mr. George Whiteley, and Mr. Field; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 5th May, and to be printed. [Bill. 47.]

BANKRUPTCY LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Law of Bankruptcy," presented by Sir Albert Rollit; supported by Sir Henry Fowler; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 48.]

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (LONDON) BILL.

"To regulate the conditions under which displacements of persons of the Labouring Class may be made in London under statutory powers, and to require the provision of sufficient new Housing Accommodation," presented by Sir John Dickson Poynder; supported by Sir John Gorst, Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Cust, and Major Evans-Gordon; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 3rd March, and to be printed. [Bill 49.]

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [17th February]

"That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Question again proposed.

ARMY ORGANISATION.

*Mr. BECKETT (Yorkshire, N.R., Whitby) said that in moving the Amendment which stood in his name, he was giving expression to the opinion entertained not only by many members of that House, but by almost everybody outside. To every one who had followed the signs of the times it could not but be apparent that the policy of the War Office would be seriously challenged; and it was only right and fitting that this strong disapproval should find utterance in the House of Commons. It was not agreeable—indeed, it was intensely disagreeable—to find oneself in opposition to a Government which one desired to support, and he wished, therefore, to make it perfectly clear that he was attacking the policy, not of the Government, but of a Department; not the administration of affairs in general, but the administration of the Army in particular; and in doing this he ran counter to no Unionist principles whatever; he claimed to be as sound and loyal a Conservative as any hon. Member who might rise in the course of that debate to defend the system. His task was not rendered easier by the fact that the head of the Department attacked was a friend of over twenty years standing, for whom he had the warmest regard, and whose excellent and admirable qualities he held in the highest esteem. But when one saw a friend embarking on a course which must lead to disaster, it was the part of a friend to give warning of the danger, and to attempt to divert him into another course, at the end of which was to be found success. He appreciated the great difficulties with which his right hon. friend had had to deal, and the zeal and energy with which he had tried to cope with them. But the measure of his difficulties had been the measure of his opportunities. No man had ever had greater opportunities, but he regretted to say that, from their point of view, those opportunities had been unhappily used or deplorably neglected; and, instead of putting the Army on a new and efficient basis, the right hon. Gentleman had produced a scheme unsound in principle and ruinous in practice.

He would endeavour to make good his words without going into more detail than was absolutely necessary It was high time that the nation took stock of its position. They had made great efforts and great sacrifices, and they seriously needed a period of rest and recuperation. He remembered, just before the war broke out, attending a bankers' dinner at which Lord Salisbury was present, and addressed a serious warning to the nation, telling them they were in danger of doing what men of business called "trading beyond their capital"—that they were in danger of undertaking obligations they would not be able to meet, and assuming responsibilities greater than they were able to bear. If that warning was needed then, how much more was it needed now, when we had spent over £200,000,000 sterling in South Africa. The war was over, but the consequences remained, as they were unpleasantly reminded every time the tax-gatherer knocked at their doors. The taxpayer urgently required relief; but taxation could only be reduced if expenditure were reduced, and reduction of expenditure was naturally looked for where it had most largely increased, viz., on the Army. Every one would agree that if for two-thirds of the present cost the country could have a thoroughly efficient Army which would meet all the needs of the Empire, it was the duty of the Minister for War to provide such an Army. His proposition was that for twenty millions of money we could have an Army better suited than the one which now existed to meet all the needs of the Empire. Before he asked for thirty millions of money, it was the business of the Secretary of State for War to show that the present force was needed; that every man was absolutely necessary, and could not be dispensed with, and he had never attempted to do that. The nation wanted to know what were the needs of the Empire, and what sort of Army was required for their defence. The nation was conscious of extravagant expenditure with inadequate results, and wanted sufficient security at a reasonable cost. They wanted to know what purposes the Army was intended to serve, and how much was to be spent on it. This information had been given to the authorities at Pall Mall, or it had not. If it had, then the nation which had to pay was entitled to be informed what it had to pay for, and why it had to pay so much. If it had not, then the military authorities had been organising in a haphazard fashion for an uncertain object, and no wonder, then, that the result had been something like chaos.

There had been no authoritative statement as to the views of the authorities as to the requirements from the Army except that issued by Mr. Stanhope in a Memorandum issued in the year 1891. It was a rather interesting document, but he did not propose to read it to the House. He would content himself with reading a paragraph—

> "It will be distinctly understood that the employment of Army Corps in the field in any European war is sufficiently improbable to make it the primary duty of the military authorities to organise efficiently our forces for defence."

Therefore, according to that Memorandum, our primary duty was to organise our forces efficiently for the defence of the country. The outcome of that view was this scheme of six Army Corps. He thought it would be rather interesting if they could ever find out what was the genesis and conception of the Six Army Corps scheme. How was it that the Secretary for War managed to hit on this scheme? Was it adopted after long consultation with the officials at the War Office? Was it subjected to careful examination and minute criticism? Were those responsible for the efficiency of the Army called into consultation, and did they pronounce a blessing upon it? He understood nothing of the kind took place. He understood that the War Office repudiated the paternity of this scheme. They always thought it a very remarkable performance on the part of Jupiter when, after pains in the head, he produced from his brain Minerva, fully armed and equipped; but that performance sank into insignificance compared to that of the Secretary for War, who, after a few days' pains in his head, produced six Army Corps, armed and equipped, ready for everything except war.

He had several objections to this Army Corps scheme. His first objection was that it was based on a wrong principle; his second was that it was not fitted for the real needs of the country; his third was that it was enormously costly; his fourth was that it did not remove the defects which the war in South Africa so clearly revealed; his fifth was that it was not adapted to the conditions of service in this country; and the sixth was that it had no real existence. He ventured to say that the defence of this country was the primary duty, first of the Navy and next of its citizens. Our history and our position alike indicated this policy to us. It was not for nothing that we were hemmed round by the inviolate sea, on which floated the most powerful Navy in the world. If our position compelled us to maintain our Navy at an overwhelming strength, it relieved us from the necessity of maintaining a large Army to guard our frontiers, for our frontiers were the sea, and these could only be properly guarded by the Navy. If the War Office contended, as he understood they did, that our Navy did not defend us efficiently, that was an argument for strengthening our Navy, not for strengthening our Army; and therefore he absolutely endorsed the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife, when he said that an Army organised for home defence was a costly, wasteful and foolish luxury. His right hon. friend the Secretary for War asked, if we lost temporary command of the sea, whether we should allow the country to be despoiled by our foes. This meant that we were asked to spend £30,000,000 annually because moments might occur, which, if they did not occur, would be absolutely thrown away. No wise nation will strain its resources, cripple its finances, and saddle itself with a huge burden of taxation merely to provide against a contingency that had not occurred for a thousand years, and which was never likely to occur again. What did the temporary loss of the command of the sea mean? It meant that either the Navy was temporarily disabled or was lured away to other parts of the globe. Did any one imagine that under these circumstances any foreign foe would dare to land a force on these shores, which might be shut up and caught like rats in a trap? It was Moltke who said that, in such a contingency, he knew of twenty ways of getting into England, but not one of getting out. We need not, he thought, be afraid of a temporary raid.

We ought to rely far more than the War Office had done hitherto on the citizens of this country. We had never appealed to the people of England in the right way; and if we did not appeal to them in the right way we could not expect them to do what we wanted them to do. He believed that if appealed to in the right way we should get such a response as would astonish the gentlemen at the War Office, and would show that the people of England were not so dead to their duty and interest as these gentlemen believed. We had the raw material for the finest and cheapest citizen Army that the world had ever seen, and, properly trained and organised, they could repel with ease any temporary raid, which, indeed, would never be attempted. It was common knowledge that the Volunteer force had been discouraged by the War Office; and that men had been driven out of that force because the War Office had laid down regulations with which it was impossible for Volunteer Officers to comply. The Volunteers might not be fully trained—as he would show that the Regular Army was not properly trained; but he maintained that an imperfectly trained Volunteer was a better man for defence of the country than a citizen not trained at all. It was not only on the Volunteers that the course pursued by the War Office had had a most pernicious effect, but also on the defence forces in the Colonies. He had a letter from a General in Australia who was in a position to know, and who said that—

> "The main obstacle to the organisation of the forces of the Colonies of Australia was the odium in which the War Office was held."

Mr. Beckett.

And here he would like to make a quotation from Lord Roberts who, in an article, said—

> "What are really required for England, are two Armies—a home Army, and a foreign service Army. The former should consist, I conceive, of some sort of Militia, and this should be our reserve. The latter should always be in the most perfect state of efficiency, ready to take the field in our distant possessions upon the shortest possible notice."

A large Regular Army for home defence was not mentioned in that definition; and when the Commander-in-Chief talked of operations abroad he referred to our distant possessions. He never contemplated that our Regular Army should ever be employed on the Continent. He was not going to discuss the question of Canada. Of what use would two Army Corps be in America? If we had to contend with America, we would have to put the whole nation into the field. It might be said that a large Regular Army would be required on the Indian frontier. He knew something about our Indian frontier, and he thought that this idea of an invasion of India by Russia was a good deal of a bugbear. A Russian officer had said to him—

> "In the first place, no one contemplates invading India. It is true we bring pressure upon your Indian frontier when we want to get something out of you in other parts of the world. We do not seriously contemplate the invasion of India, because, in the first place, we do not want India, and in the second place, because it would be impossible."

We knew that, armed as we were with modern weapons and smokeless powder, it would be impossible for an invading Army to get through the passes. Then we also knew that until Quetta, on whose fortification so much had been spent, was taken, it would be perfectly impossible for Russia to march on India. All that would be needed would be to strengthen the Indian garrison from home, and it would not require a great Army to do that. And here he would quote from what President Roosevelt, of the United States, had said only the other day, which exactly expresses our ideal of what the English Army ought to be—

> "The [American] Army is small, and it is not desirable that it should be other than small relatively to the population, but we have a right to expect that it shall represent for its size the very highest point of efficiency in the civilised world."

Whatever else could be said about it, the great increase in the expenditure on our Army was a fact, open, gross and palpable to the eyes and pockets of all men. He maintained that the Army was not only unsuited to our needs, but enormously costly. The increase of expenditure was very great. He would take the year 1880, in which he had a particular interest because the father of the present Financial Secretary to the War Office was then Secretary for War. At that time the total expenditure on the Army was £14,980,000, and that was just after the Zulu War and the Afghan War, and shortly before and after we were ready to go to war with Russia. In the year 1899 the expenditure was £20,617,000. That was the year before the Boer War. And now the expenditure had risen to £29,310,000—an expenditure which was out of all proportion to the increase of our population and to the increase of our trade. The Government said that that increase of expenditure was inevitable. Well, let them prove it to be inevitable. We had no evidence of the fact. There was a point beyond which expenditure could not go, for the simple reason that the taxpayers of the country would rebel against it. Moreover—and he strongly urged this consideration—it might be that in indulging in this inflated expenditure we were running the risk of provoking a reaction which might lead to a dangerous parsimony. He held that the distribution of expenditure upon the Army and Navy required reconsideration, though he need not dwell on that, because it was admitted by everybody that the predominant position of the Navy must be accepted, and that the Army should be supplemental to the Navy.

His contention was that for such increased expenditure no adequate result had been obtained, although glaring defects had been revealed. Would those defects be removed under the scheme of the Secretary of State for War? When he called attention to defects in the Army he must be understood as making no reflection whatever on the officers and men, who did their duty so gallantly in the field. The defects to which he referred were mainly due to three causes—the lack of foresight, the lack of organisation, and the lack of training. Nothing had been thought out before the early disasters of the war in South Africa, and no proper preparations had been made to meet what was called an "inevitable war." Recently the Prime Minister stated—and his announcement created a great deal of interest in the country—that the Council of Defence had been reconstituted. Of course the reconstitution was proof, if proof were needed, that the previous Council of Defence was a farce and a failure. Yet, they should remember that before the previous Council of Defence there was the prospect of an inevitable war which it would have been thought would have been a sufficient inducement and stimulus to bring the members of the Council together in order to deliberate and consult and prepare for the war. What assurance had the House of Commons that without any such stimulus or inducement the Council of Defence would rise to any higher conception of its duties. He sincerely hoped and believed that it would; but their good faith in the matter was of the substance of things hoped for, and based on the evidence of things unseen. He observed one deficiency in the composition of the Council. He thought that the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to be a member of it. The members who composed it had one eye on the sea and one on shore, but they had to have their eyes constantly on the Exchequer. Therefore the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to be a member of the Council in order to measure its schemes by the sound standard of pounds, shillings, and pence. He himself wanted to know what the Council of Defence thought of the present Army scheme, and he asked the Prime Minister if he would regard the scheme with an open mind. The Prime Minister replied that he regarded all questions with an open mind, in which he himself fully concurred. At the same time he wished to know whether his right hon. friend would regard the Army scheme in particular with an open mind, as it involved a large expenditure of money if the Army Corps were to be put on a more stable, or less unstable, foundation. Ministers would tell the House of Commons next year that the country was committed to the scheme, but they now wanted the Council of Defence to examine the scheme before the country was committed to it, and they desired an assurance from the Prime Minister that, if needs be, the six Army

Corps would be thrown into the melting pot. Were the politicians on the Council to dictate to the soldiers or sailors, or were the soldiers or sailors to dictate to the politicians? If the Cabinet wanted the plans of the soldiers or the sailors they could always have them; and the fact that the plans were submitted to the Council of Defence did not add any new feature to its composition, or give any new assurance of its effective working.

After all, the Council of Defence could only examine and dispose of schemes of attack and defence on the intelligence supplied to it by the Intelligence Department, and the Intelligence Department could only supply intelligence if it were properly and efficiently manned. At the present moment the Intelligence Department of the War Office was very much undermanned, and it was practically impossible for it to discharge the work committed to it. When they read an official definition of the duties to be performed by one man over countries extending almost from China to Peru, and including preparations for attack in each country, plans for the defence of the colonies, the co-ordination and distribution of the military forces of the Crown, to imagine that they could be efficiently performed by one man was to imagine an absurdity. In America, the first thing they did was to create a well-paid staff. But then America believed in brains; they in England did not believe in brains. They believed in collecting specials, flat-foots, weedy boys and a whole host of undesirables, and paying them large sums of money, while they starved the brains department. Information was the last thing the War Office wanted, and all the information that came to them was suspect, unless it was tied up with red tape, and stamped with the official seal. In fact, it might have been written over the door of the War Office, "Information not wanted here." Then, lack of organisation would exist under the new scheme no less than under the old. They had it on the highest authority that at the outbreak of the war the Army was not organised for war. That was perfectly evident, because, when the Army was called upon, not one single battalion or battery was ready to take the field. What would have happened if the Boers had pushed on in South Africa, and if no Volunteers were forthcoming, he shrank from contemplating. It would, however, have been a disaster of the first magnitude to the British Empire. The truth was that the Army was not organised, and would not be organised, for war, because the Army scheme was based on a fallacy. It was entirely dependent on the exact maintenance of an equality between units at home and abroad, which was impossible. With reference to that, Lord Wolseley said:—

> "The moment that basis broke down the whole system is thrown out of gear, and it becomes impossible to maintain the system or organisation which was created and based on that principle."

That was to say that when war broke out the system broke down. He would make a frank admission to the Secretary of State for War—that his Army Corps were as perfect as he doubtless would make them out to be, provided they were not asked to go anywhere or do anything. It was true that in spite of their lack of organisation they muddled through. A Minister of the Crown the other day said that it did not matter whether they muddled through as long as the British Empire came out uppermost. That was an unfortunate doctrine, and when a Minister of the Crown talked like that he was extremely ill-advised. For his part he said that the country was getting tired of a policy of mess, muddle, and make-believe. It wanted to see its work well, thoroughly and efficiently done. But it was hopeless to expect organisation in the Army until the War Office, which was the head and front of the offending, had been organised itself. Commissions sat again and again to examine into the defects of the War Office. They laid their fingers on the same defects and made pretty well the same recommendations, but the War Office went its way unheeding. If he might parody a well-known verse, he would say—

"They hear Commissions thunder past
 In silent, deep disdain;
They bow their heads before the blast,
 Then plunge in tape again."

They had heard a good deal about decentralisation, which was a very good thing if they could get it; but inquiries in the Army Corps districts showed that there was no more decentralisation under the new scheme than there was under the old. The War Office lay like a nightmare on the chest of the Army.

A Commission had been appointed to inquire into the training of officers. He did not know whether its recommendations had been adopted; but if they had not, it was quite time they were. He did not blame the officers; it was perfectly obvious they could not train men unless they had men to train. Even from the battalions which had been referred to as "squeezed lemons" there were deductions for foreign drafts, special duties, employment in regimental workshops, etc. It was not surprising in such circumstances that there was a universal complaint that commanding officers never saw their battalions, or company officers their companies, because there were neither battalions nor companies to see. The depôts were too few, and required instructors. They would have to be increased in number, and efficient instructors would have to be appointed. The men were taken away from the depôts before they were properly trained; and, to quote a military officer of great experience, "to expect efficiency under such a system was to expect a miracle." Yet the nation was asked to expend £30,000,000 on expenditure from which to expect efficiency was to expect a miracle. The result of the system was that they could not carry on even a small war without calling out the Reserves to form part of the fighting line. One of the most urgent needs, as was undoubtedly and universally admitted, was that we should have a small expeditionary force that could be sent anywhere at a moment's notice, without mobilisation, and without calling Parliament together. The Army Corps system did not give this force, and could not give it so long as the system of linked battalions remained. With regard to the linked battalion system he would like to quote objections to which that was open. Lord Roberts said:—

> "As a rule, the battalion in which a man first makes his home is the one he will like best to the end of his service, and constant and compulsory change, or even a liability to such change, does more to make a soldier dislike the Army and kill the *esprit de corps* that used to exist than anything else."

The Army Corps were founded on this very system. Coming to the Army Corps themselves, what and where were these Army Corps? They were on a large piece of paper it was true, but were they anywhere else? He remembered when the Secretary of State for War, two years ago, came down, like the poet, "with his eye in fine frenzy rolling," to give to these six "airy nothings a local habitation and a name." He did not intend to quote figures—he could quote figures to any extent—but those figures would, no doubt, be objected to by the War Office, while any figures quoted by the War Office would be objected to by their critics. All that he would say was that if anybody wanted to satisfy himself as to whether these Army Corps existed, and in what state, that person had better go to the headquarters of the Army Corps and see for himself. One industrious journalist had gone about looking for a missing Army Corps. He reminded one of those patient, persevering savants who perambulated the globe in search of the missing link. They might find a skull and a bone or two, but they never discovered the entire man, and he predicted that a similar failure would await any one who tried to discover an entire Army Corps. Even if an entire Army Corps were found, his argument was not affected in the least; in fact it was, if anything, strengthened, because the more complete it was, the more money it would cost. And not only must the number of men in these Army Corps be considered, but also what proportion of them were efficient soldiers. The figures of the War Office were largely open to suspicion on this point; because, though the House was told at the commencement of the war in South Africa that we had 109,000 men, it turned out subsequently, according to the statement of the Secretary of State for War, that 92,000 of them were not fit to take the field.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): That was contradicted by Lord Lansdowne, and entirely disproved.

*MR. BECKETT: Excuse me, I can quote Lord Lansdowne's words.

* Mr. BRODRICK: I can also quote. Lord Lansdowne denied it, and said an interpretation was put upon his words that they did not bear.

*Mr. BECKETT: Of course, I know that the 92,000 were available later on, but not at that moment.

* Mr. BRODRICK: Lord Lansdowne showed that at that very moment more than half of them were available.

*Mr. BECKETT: That is quite enough for me, Sir. Continuing, the hon. Member said he did not object to the country being divided up into six districts, nor did he object to the Army for home defence being divided into Army Corps, but he strongly objected to Army Corps, whether complete or incomplete, for the reason that they were extremely costly; the work of the staff was extremely costly, the work which was now being done by a general at £4,000 a year being that which in the past was done by a general at £800 a year. This Army Corps system also blocked the way to Army reform; they would never get Army reform until these Army Corps were swept away, root and branch. It increased the numbers of nominal soldiers without increasing the efficiency of the fighting units, and considering the fact that our military service was totally different from any continental system, he thought there was great danger in adopting continental systems. Continental nations had to defend a compact territory, whilst we had to defend widely-scattered dominions. They trusted for their defence to an Army; we trusted for our defence to a Navy. An Army Corps in England stretches from Dover to Plymouth, from the Isle of Wight to Pembrokeshire, and, spread over so wide a country, it cannot be organised, manœuvered or trained as a fighting unit. The Army Corps system on the Continent was intended to facilitate the handling of large masses of men. We were not called upon to handle such numbers, and if the House considered the nature of our requirements and the probabilities of the future, they would see that not once in 100 times would an entire Army Corps be required. A great part of these Army Corps were composed of auxiliaries, which would be withdrawn from them at once if required to serve outside this country; and even if the Army Corps were complete they could not be moved *en masse* to the frontiers; they would be broken up when they were put on board ship, and as each ship reached the other side the men would be marched to the front as they arrived, and an Army Corps would therefore never take the field, except in a fragmentary condition. There was only one place in which an Army Corps could be manœuvred, and that was South Africa, and if one were sent out there it might be a useful thing. If the Government sent out 20,000 men, as they proposed to do, to South Africa, they still had to keep the linked battalions at home; but if an Army Corps were sent out, and it were put on the home establishment, they had not to provide linked battalions for it. As a matter of fact the whole thing hung upon the recruiting, and upon this he would quote what General Russell said:—

> "The recruiting difficulty is at the bottom of all our Army troubles and embarrassments; it is the principal cause of our great expenditure in proportion to results as compared with foreign armies. It hampers our Army training; it impairs our efficiency; it imposes endless trammels on the hands of our officials connected with Army administration, be they military or civilian, in that it is the great difficulty we have to solve, and until solved all so-called schemes of Army reform must be in the future, as they have been in the past, snares and delusions."

The difficulty of the recruiting arose from the fact that they wanted more men than the country was willing to supply, and the War Office proposed to solve this difficulty by asking for more still. The normal amount of men available was 25,000, and when more than this number was required then the pay had to be increased, which was a good thing, and the standard had to be lowered, which was bad. He also thought that during the war the War Office lost a great opportunity. The one thing this war had shown was the value of intelligence and character, and men of intelligence and character could only be attracted by improving the conditions of service and raising the pay, but we were still recruiting from the same class as before. Upon this point he would just quote the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting:—

> "Besides this, the annual net desertions—it is no use blinking the fact—amount to about 2,500; and the total wastage of men per annum

amounts to something like 50 per cent. of the annual contingent. Thus it is no exaggeration to say that of the 35,000 recruits who should annually arrive in fit physical condition to keep our Army up to its normal and sufficient strength, we only get about half the number of good men; the rest are mere expensive trash."

The Government were packing their Army Corps with "expensive trash," and then come down to this House and boast of their success in raising recruits. He wished to point out the dilemma in which the War Office had landed themselves. The men enlisted for three years, with power to extend their service, in which case they would receive an extra sixpence. The idea was, he supposed, to pass as many men as possible into the Reserve. But they could not pass men into the Reserve and provide men for the foreign drafts at the same time. If a sufficient number of men were not induced by this extra sixpence to extend their term of service, the War Office would be absolutely unable to furnish their foreign drafts and the whole system came to the ground. It was a gamble on a sixpence; the whole fate of the British Empire turned upon a sixpence. Here he would mention a quotation from an article by Lord Roberts:—

> "We are sacrificing our Army to obtain a Reserve. . . . Any attempt to make the Foreign Service Army subservient to the Reserve must end in failure, and I confidently predict, in disgrace and disaster."

AN HON. MEMBER: That was in 1884.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): 1881.

*MR. BECKETT said that in any case it was repeated on Lord Roberts' authority in 1900. But he might be asked—"What is your scheme? You propose to pull down; how do you propose to build up?" He submitted that in his diagnosis of the disease he had sufficiently indicated the nature of the remedy that he would suggest. In any case, it was not his present business to propound the remedy. Once the principle was accepted, the details would fall into their proper places. If his right hon. friend did him the honour to consult him, he would give him a broad outline of the details of his scheme, but the present was not the time or place to produce them. That scheme had been adopted after careful consideration of the circumstances, and the most severe criticism by skilled experts; its supporters did not trust to their own wisdom. He wished the question could be decided on its merits, unexposed to the undertow of Party currents. It was a national issue of the highest importance, and these were issues in which the crack of the Party whip ought not to be heard or, if heard, disregarded. No doubt the Prime Minister, in eloquent and moving terms, would make an appeal to his followers, and such was the charm the right hon. Gentleman invariably exercised, that he had no doubt that appeal would not be made in vain. He (the speaker), however, appealed not to Party, but to a principle—the principle that there were times when it was the duty of every Member of the House to let national interests over-ride Party obligations. There was not one of their trusted leaders, either past or present, who had not, at one or another period of his career, acted on that principle, and what had been right for them in the past could not be wrong for us in the present.

He therefore asked the House to vote against the scheme of his right hon. friend on the following grounds: that it involved a huge expenditure without adequate result; that its cost, compared with that of the Navy, was altogether out of proportion to the national requirements from the two services; that it annually demanded a huge sum of money which ought either to be saved to the taxpayers or spent on the Navy; that its organisation was not adapted to the work it had to do, and would infallibly break down under the crucial test of war; that it did not provide an expeditionary force or a real reserve; that it was unsuited to the protection of the Empire and was no safeguard against the invasion of this country; that it was too small to contend with the conscript armies of the Continent, and too large for expeditionary purposes in distant parts of the world; that it failed to remove the defects rendered apparent by the late war, and left untouched the great organisation in which those defects had their source and origin; that its numbers did not exist except on paper, and could not be obtained except at an inordinate cost; in a word, that it was unsound in principle, ruinous in practice, and ought to be swept away, abandoned, and replaced by another scheme under which the country would have a force which would meet and fulfil the requirements of the Empire, without laying too great a burden on the resources of the nation.

*Major SEELY (Isle of Wight), in seconding the Amendment, said that Members on his side of the House fully realised the gravity of speaking and voting for this Amendment to the Address, but they were taking their present course because they believed the matter to be above and beyond all Party considerations. Their objections to the proposals of the Secretary of State were not as to details, but were fundamental, and ought not to be in any way affected by Party. He entirely dissociated himself from any personal attack upon any man, except in so far as that man was identified with the system embodying such faulty principles. The strong step of moving this Amendment, and carrying it to a division, was being taken because its supporters believed that the faulty principles to which he referred would end by landing the country in national disaster. They had not forgotten that only two and a half years ago that national disaster seemed very near, and they believed that the policy now being pursued, so far from leading towards a solution of the difficulties, was making it more likely that if troubles arose in future we should be even less prepared to meet them than in the past. As a humble student of military affairs, he supported the Amendment on four main grounds. The first was that the country was now committed to spending as much on the Army as on the Navy. In this year's Estimates the amount for the Army was slightly less than that for the Navy, but by the present scheme more would have to be spent on the Army than on the Navy.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) dissented.

*Major SEELY thought the right hon. Gentleman would find that when he had all his forces complete, the cost would amount to more than was being spent on the Navy. In declaring this to be an unsound policy, he did not quite agree with the mover of the Amendment in saying that if the Navy were supreme we required no Army at all at home. He thought that that was not a sound thesis.

*Mr. BECKETT: I never said that.

*Major SEELY believed it would be a disastrous day for this country if such a view obtained. He understood his hon. friend's view to be that the defence of the country must be entrusted, not to a Regular Army, paid all the year round, but to a body of citizens who received only the few shillings that they were paid during the time they were training. Of that he would speak later. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean had always held that the rank and file of an army could be improvised at a moment's notice. We had had good reason to know that, given the initial skill with the weapon and the necessary patriotism, an army could be improvised in two small States to overcome which required a force of 250,000 men from England. But a fleet could not possibly be improvised; it took years to build; consequently he thought the general proposition might be laid down that as long as we lived on an island, with a widely scattered Empire, whatever was spent on the Navy, far less must be spent on the Army. Therefore, as a navy could not be improvised, while an army to a large extent could be, any scheme which proposed to spend as much on the Army as on the Navy was based on a wrong principle and would have to be abandoned.

His second thesis was that the Government were endeavouring to create too large a Regular Army. It was too large because it was beyond the power of our purse. Taxation had reached the limit to which it was safe to go; therefore, disagreeable though it might be, the fact had to be faced.

Apart from that, the Army was beyond our needs. What were the three Army Corps for foreign service for? For three Army Corps to attack any white nation was impossible. One evident lesson of the late war was that to attack any white people in the world would require, not three, but probably thirty, Army Corps. Three Army Corps were utterly inadequate to wage war on any foreign country, and to commence a struggle on that basis would infallibly end in failure. What else could they be for? Surely not for fighting against black races? It was not suggested that to meet the Mad Mullah, or any of the black races with whom this country was occasionally brought into conflict, would require so great a force as 100,000 men. It might be said that they were to keep this country from invasion. He would lay down a cardinal principle, and once this was adopted he believed all their difficulties would vanish, and that was that the force established for the defence of this country from invasion, whether that contingency was likely or unlikely, or whether they wanted, 1,000 men or 5,000,000, was not the affair of the Regular Army, but of the citizen Army of this country. Therefore he could not see himself what these three Army Corps for foreign service were for, still less could one see what the other three Army Corps were for. There could be no doubt of the great expense they would entail.

There was another reason, for holding that they were asking for too large an Army, namely, that they were asking for numbers which went beyond the limits of voluntary recruiting. It must be apparent to every one conversant with recruiting that they were not getting the class of men they desired to enlist. Of the recruits obtained those who had the necessary physique to go through the arduous training to which they were subjected, and those who had the character to resist the many temptations of the soldier, had done them yeoman service in South Africa, and this he knew well, for he had served there, side by side with them. They were now obtaining a very large number of men who would never be able to take the field. He had not been able to ascertain the precise number of men who proceeded to the late war from our home battalions, but he knew that little more than half of the full strength of the home battalions proceeded to the war in South Africa. That showed that they were keeping up a system of sham. It was no good pretending that they had a battalion when they had not got it; and they would find when war came and they had only got half of a battalion to go to the war, they would have to make some other arrangements, or else confess that they had only got the half, and not try to make out that they had got the whole. He knew what was in the minds of many persons at the War Office and people elsewhere. They thought—and they were most patriotic persons—that if they set down this high standard of the number of troops required, and if at the same time they could, by imposing a rather rigid standard upon voluntary troops, get rid of them, that in a moment of trouble the nation would say: "We cannot get the men we require by voluntary means; let us resort to conscription." He would respectfully submit that that was the counsel of folly. To attempt to fill their foreign service Army, to garrison Madras or to fight the Mad Mullah; to allow the men to be severed altogether from their homes; and to say they were to attempt to obtain such an Army by conscription, was an attempt which was bound to fail, and it was a system which would not be accepted by any free country in the world, nor was it now accepted by any free country. He believed that the true path of safety of this country lay in every man being trained to arms, in whatever way was possible.

Everyone who viewed what took place in South Africa, especially at the later stages of the war, must recognise the great danger of disregarding that first rule of national safety, the necessity of every man learning the use of his weapon, as every Englishman used to do in times gone by. Now our sense of responsibility and the need for self-sacrifice should be more than ever appreciated, but to suggest that you should fill up your foreign service Army by conscription did seem to him a counsel which was bound to end in complete failure. If they were to attempt to make an Army larger than voluntary enlistment would supply, then let them dispel altogether the idea that there was this other way to get the men. Look the facts frankly in the face, and if they had only got 10,000 men fit for service call them a Division and not an Army Corps. He believed an hon. Member of that House once described bi-metallism as a principle by which they took a shilling and called it 1s. 6d. The present principle in regard to the Army Corps seemed to be to take a Division and call it an Army Corps, and it was claimed that by this principle they were immediately multiplying their force by three. He should have thought that probably that was not the case.

The third ground on which they opposed this system was that not only were they spending too much money on their Army, but they were spending it in the wrong direction, because they had not got at the root of the trouble which cost them so much during the last war. They were spending more and more money on infantry battalions, upon men they obtained with difficulty, and which they obtained only by reducing the standard. They had not increased the Army in those essential things which bitter experience in South Africa had taught them was necessary. He accepted certain items of expenditure, for no doubt there were many things in which a great advance had been made. He should imagine that in the force to which he had the honour to belong an advance had been made, although the expenditure had been great. He accepted this case because it was only a small matter, and because the provision of mounted men in a country where people had practically ceased to ride, would always be a matter of the greatest difficulty and expense. He referred to that, because it seemed to him that a greater proportion of the Regular Army should be composed of mounted men, and the greater proportion should be composed of every sort and kind of men who had had a special training which could not be given on the spur of the moment. But that was not all. They all knew that the War Office had been abused unfairly. They all knew very well that everything which had been laid at its door was not true. They knew perfectly well that the individuals at the War Office were endeavouring to do their best, but they also knew that a faulty system existed there which wanted rooting out from the bottom to the top, and it was this system which prevented any man, however public spirited and determined he might be, from administering the affairs of the Army in a proper manner. A system prevailed there by which everyone meddled in everyone else's affairs, and by which officers who were specially directed to have control of certain affairs were constantly interfered with by others who had other duties to perform.

*Mr BRODRICK: Will my hon. friend give an instance?

*Major SEELY said he regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had asked for an instance, for he must give him a case which he was about to pass over. He was about to refer to the loss of Volunteers which had occurred in Great Britain, although they found that they did not get too many trained men for the late war. It struck them as curious that the same Minister who had been obliged to send men to South Africa who could not shoot to fight their battles should be the man who drove the few trained men they had from their ranks. He had been informed—and he awaited an explanation—of a certain Army Order which caused the bitterest offence amongst the Volunteers of the country, and which was probably responsible for many resignations. The precise terms of this Order first became known to the officer principally concerned through the columns of the Press.

*Mr. BRODRICK: That is not so. That Army Order went through every channel, and had the opinion of every authority taken upon it before it got my signature.

*Major SEELY said if the right hon. Gentleman would make inquiries he thought he would find that he was in error in stating that the officers principally concerned were fully conversant with that Order.

*Mr. BRODRICK: I do not think these allegations should be made without giving us the facts. What officer principally concerned was not aware of that Order before he saw it in the columns of the newspapers?

*MAJOR SEELY said he thought he had explained that. He was alluding to the Inspector General of the Auxiliary Forces at the War Office. This was what he referred to when he said that there was a principle at the War Office by which everybody meddled in everybody else's business. They knew full well there were misunderstandings, and though the Order was understood, the precise terms of it were not understood. He was perfectly certain of his facts. It was obvious that this might have been a matter in which it was the precise phraseology employed which was unknown to the responsible officer, but it so happened that this phraseology had caused the whole trouble, and might cause further trouble in the future. He would not delay the House further on the matter of the lack of responsibility which rested upon individual officers. It existed in the field in South Africa, but by degrees that vicious system was eliminated whilst the men were on active service. At the beginning of the war their system of red tape hampered their movements, but by degrees a wiser system prevailed, and people were allowed, to use a vulgar phrase, to "run their own show," and the principle of "one man, one job" was adopted. He supposed that no one in the War Office would deny that that principle did not obtain there. Various Commissions had recommended that that principle should obtain at the War Office, and this country was determined that it should prevail.

He had only one more word to say, and it was, to his mind, the chief objection to the present system that was before this House. They were confusing the functions of the foreign service Army with the functions of the home service Army. What were these six Army Corps composed of? Hon. Members knew that they were composed, as to three of them, partly of Regular troops and partly of Volunteers. That had most far-reaching results, and he believed it would cause more trouble to us than anything else. The foreign service Army, composed of Regular troops, had produced men who did us good service in time of war; our auxiliary Army had also produced men—who had done good service in time of war. It had produced men not only from this country, but from every colony of the Empire, who had done good service, and their Regular brethren who had served with them side by side would admit that they were very similar to them in fighting capacity. The reason for this was not far to seek. It had been well pointed out that the qualities which the modern soldier required were courage, character, common-sense, and trust in his leader. They might obtain these essential qualities by different methods; one method was by taking a man when he was young, as was done in the Navy, and by training him in high ideals to withstand the awful ordeal of war. That it was an awful ordeal nobody would ever deny, because it could not be forgotten that nobody surrendered because he liked it. The auxiliary, by a totally different method, arrived at the same result, but it obviously was not an affair of whether there were to be five, or three, or two or four days' training. It was an affair of the sort of man he was, and whether he believed that his services were wanted, and whether he had the courage to offer them when the time came. But the Government were confusing two totally different things in these Army Corps. They seemed to say: "Our Regular troops need not be so rigidly disciplined as before; they can be a little bit more like the Volunteers, or the Volunteers must be made a little more like the Regulars." They were trying to convert the Volunteers into sham Regulars, and by a persistent policy of so doing they were alienating the sympathies of the Regular Army, who had reason to be annoyed that they should be placed in an Army Corps, having the same uniform and organisation with men who, though as good in time of war, yet only went to war in time of great national emergency, while the Regular soldier had to live in unhealthy countries and go to war fifty times for the auxiliary's once.

See what effect it had on the auxiliary. The Volunteer was told, in the Order already referred to, that he had hitherto claimed to be taken seriously, and that, by implication, if he wanted to be taken seriously he must be something quite different from what he was before. Fresh regulations were laid down for him to make him appreciate in a greater or less degree what was required. What had been the result? They were losing the very men they wished to retain. They were losing them by laying down a hard and fast standard of a certain number of days consecutive training. They were losing the very men of the character who had succeeded in civil life, and who were, therefore, most likely to succeed in war. If they were losing these men, what had they got in their place? It might be said that, after all, we did not want all these Volunteers. In fact he had heard it stated that we did not want as many Volunteers as we had got. It was a fact that the Volunteers were slowly dwindling from lack of sympathetic treatment. There could be no denying the fact that, if men who could not shoot had been sent to fight our battles in South Africa, it was madness to lose the trained men we had. When he returned with these facts burned deep into his mind, he went to every place in the constituency which he had the honour to represent and told the people that the unprepared state of the nation might land us in disaster. He suggested that skill in the use of the weapon was what every man should endeavour to attain. In a few months from that time there were formed eight rifle clubs, with 650 men.

One argument which seemed to him very strong was that, if they approached the people sympathetically, there was nothing they would not do for the country. The hon. Member instanced the life-boat service, which he described as a singularly close parallel. There were always men ready to undertake that arduous and terrible work without any inducement except a few shillings. If that service were put under the Government at Pall Mall, he did not think the men would undertake the work for £60 a year. They would, he thought, want £100 every time they went out. If this was true of the men who were engaged in that service saving life, was it not possibly true also of those who would be willing to engage in saving the country from invasion or disaster? It seemed to him that they had been for a long series of years, which had only now culminated, pursuing a policy which was bound to lead us into disaster, simply because we would not trust in the people and make it easy for them to take up the burden they were anxious to take up, and to fit themselves for whatever might be in store for them. Therefore he begged to second this Amendment. He urged hon. Members to regard this as a non-Party matter. If it were made a Party matter, it would be to him a cause of distress to vote against the Party to which he had given his support in its education policy, its South African policy, and in other ways; but still he asked the House to affirm that the Government had strayed from the straight path of national safety, that they must spend more upon the Navy, that they must reduce the Regular Army, and that in order to make the country safe they must appeal frankly to their countrymen to do their utmost to take up the burden which others had taken up. If the Government did so, he was convinced that they would not appeal to the people in vain, and that one day we should be the strongest nation in the world.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

"But we humbly regret that the organisation of the land forces is unsuited to the needs of the Empire, and that no proportionate gain in strength and efficiency has resulted from the recent increases in military expenditure."—(*Mr. Beckett.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the Secretary of State for War at the present moment was perhaps a little badly treated by the House of Commons and the Press. He was going to admit that on the whole the right hon. Gentleman was an improving Secretary of State, but the improvement was sadly slow. Those who two or three years ago voted against the military scheme had no option except to oppose it now. The real misfortune of the Secretary of State for War was that which had been told to the country by his former colleague the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was a little hard on the Secretary of State that one who had collective responsibility for this scheme, which he supported two years ago by his vote, should nevertheless have entirely confirmed what was said by the opponents of the scheme two years ago. The Chancellor of the Exchequer took the line that had been taken by the mover of the Amendment, and specifically stated that the Secretary of State had undertaken an impossible task. And in the *verbatim* report which appeared in the *Western Daily Press*—revised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer—he explained how this task was impossible. The right hon. Gentleman said:—

> "He (the Secretary for War) had to try to reform the administration of the Army and primarily of the War Office, and at the same time to conduct a great war. That could not be done."

The experience of the last two years had entirely confirmed that view. He had made the admission that the Secretary for War was improving, as, for example, in adopting last year a greater elasticity in the conditions of service. Had the right hon. Gentleman not done so, where would have been his recruiting? If he was able to lay before the House an improvement in recruiting, it was due to his death-bed repentance of last year. The Secretary for War had not treated the House with fairness in regard to their knowledge of the present military position. They had not had the Preliminary Annual Return or the General Annual Return of the British Army since the year 1898, and these were the Returns on which all the official calculations were based, and, when pressed to give the House the facts before this debate, the right hon. Gentleman told them that he would give them in his speech.

MR. BRODRICK (Dover): I had no knowledge that this debate was coming on until last Tuesday night, and I was only asked for the White Paper dealing with the position of the Army before the Army Estimates came on on Thursday. I have made every effort to comply with the wishes of the right hon. Gentleman.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that he and others had taken great trouble to arrive at the facts relating to the Army, but they did not know them officially. Some of the military papers had published what foreign nations called the order of battle, and others had published statements in regard to the First and Second Army Corps, and the number of men in the battalions.

MR. BRODRICK: I deny that they are right.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Well, they had made an estimate of the number of men at Aldershot and Salisbury Plain, but they should have had the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting, and the Annual Return of the British Army, which had not been published since 1898. They should have had a Report of what number of men were trained, and what the proportion of them who were just-joined recruits. The Secretary of State said that these six Army Corps which he put before the House were real—as real as he said two years ago, when they were spoken of as phantom or paper corps. A late Secretary of State for War, who was still living, Mr. Gathorne Hardy, put before the House a scheme of eight Army Corps in 1876, and these figured in the Army List till 1881 as the official representation of what he called a Field Army, apart from garrisons. Almost the same phrase was used by the present Secretary for War. But these eight Army Corps were removed from the Army List in 1881, and declared to be phantoms. He would like to ask the Secretary for War how could he declare that the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Army Corps were any more real than the eight Army Corps or the later six Army Corps of Mr. Hardy's scheme, which were admittedly unreal? He believed the right hon. Gentleman would probably tell the House that some of the troops intended for these Army Corps were at present in South Africa, and that they would return in May. But even after these troops returned in May these Army Corps would still be what he had said in advance, two years ago, they would be. They would be no more real now than two years ago.

The new Army reformers who had taken up the running, and, representing so many men sitting on the Benches opposite, had addressed the Houes with so much power, had adopted the position that they desired to save money on the Army in order to spend more money on the fleet. In that position they came to the view of the old Army and Navy reformers represented by his hon. and gallant friend the Member for Great Yarmouth, who had never ceased to point out to the House that, considering the nature of our Empire, the House had spent too much money on passive defence. But when it was suggested that it was possible to save ten millions out of the Army Estimates, he had two observations to make. The one was that there was great risk that they might direct or tempt the Government to save in a wrong direction—such as in guns, armaments and stores. The other observation was that they would not be able to save that sum, or anything like it, except by revolutionary Army reform. His hon. friends opposite, perpaps, did themselves some injustice before the country in an under-statement of the cost to the British Empire of military and passive defence, on the cost of troops, and on the expenditure on the land forces as compared with the expenditure on the fleet. They had to remember the expenditure not only on the army in India, the Crown Colonies and the self-governed colonies, but the amount of the Civil Estimates under the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office for land forces. The War Office did everything they could to give colour to their view. They omitted from the figures submitted to the Colonial Conference the cost of the Indian Army and Navy—an omission so stupendous that he could not understand what defence could be offered for it.

Another fact was that the War Office did not consult India on the changes they made last year, although the objections of the War Office to revolutionary Army reform had always been insisted upon, as it was, they declared, contrary to the interests of India, albeit India thought otherwise. Now, the normal peace cost from votes of Imperial defence—without any expenditure on expeditions or little wars of any kind, though such wars were always going on—was, without Supplementary Estimates, £60,845,000. There was a question whether they should or should not add the money spent from loans on military and naval works, so far as it was additional to the annuities charged. That would amount to £2,500,000 for the Army, and £1,500,000 for the Navy, or a total of £4,000,000. Add the cost of the land military forces under the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office Votes in the Civil Estimates, now increased by the creation of the 3rd battalion of the West African Frontier Force, the expenditure on land forces in Crown colonies, in self-governed Colonies, and of the Navy in India and the Colonies, apart from the small Australasian and Cape grants for the Navy, which amounted to another £3,500,000, making in all £64,500,000 or £68,500,000, according to whether they did or did not include the loan money. The normal peace expenditure in India on land forces, according to the Report of the Indian Financial Commission, at the official rate of the rupee, was £17,000,000 more, but if they took the rupee as having, as the Treasury alleged, retained its spending value in India, then the charge on India would be £25,000,000 instead of £17,000,000. They thus attained to either £81,500,000, £85,500,000, £89,500,000 or £93,500,000, according to which way they settled the doubtful points. Out of this either about £31,000,000 or about £32,000,000 would be expenditure on the Navy, and the rest on land forces. Taking the smallest figures and the lowest possible computation, we spent £31,000,000 on the naval factor, primary in Imperial defence, and £50,500,000 on land forces. Some people seemed to think that the increase of the expenditure on the Army had ceased, that the increase on the Navy Estimates was more rapid than that on the Army Estimates, because the Navy Estimates had passed the figure of the Army. But if the increase of the last three years was looked at, it would be found that it had been vastly greater on the land forces than on the fleet. In all other countries, although called military empires, and although their Navy was not the first line of defence, the increase was taking place on the fleet. The expenditure on the Army in all these great military countries was a stationary expenditure; it was on the fleets that the increase was taking place. It was only in our case, although we called ourselves an Empire of the seas, where the greatest expenditure was required on the Navy, that our chief increase had been on the Army.

Some people thought it was possible to obtain money from the colonies for the fleet, and that we must look forward to an expenditure we could not bear if we were not prepared to take strong measures to have contributions made up by the colonies. There was a chance of that when they expressed their readiness to do so a few years ago. But the opportunity which might then have been taken was lost and thrown away; and if there was still a chance of such a contribution being obtained on an adequate and effective scale, the way in which the Army and Navy told different stories at the Colonial Conference made it impossible of realisation. Without something like a revolutionary reform of the Army being undertaken, the present gigantic figures must be further swollen. The Army Corps scheme, as at present developed, had not had a full development. The expense would automatically increase year by year. At the present moment expense was being incurred in the conversion of the rifle, probably an unnecessary conversion; but, apart from such doubtful points of expenditure, there were points on which all men would agree that there must be a vast increase of expenditure under any scheme or in any circumstances. One had been already alluded to, namely the Intelligence Department. They had in the Military Intelligence Department twenty-three officers. The Germans had 250 officers in their Military Intelligence Department. In the Army and Navy Intelligence Departments together—and the Navy required world-wide information—there were forty-one officers. That was a point on which expenditure would have to be increased.

In the able series of articles which recently appeared in *The Times*—which he did not endorse in every particular, but with a great portion of which every Army reformer would agree—there was a proof of the weakness of our Intelligence Department which was the most striking he had ever read. The writer pointed out that England had an alliance with Japan. He was not concerned now to discuss the wisdom of that alliance, but they relied on Japan to supply naval and military forces in the event of operations in the extreme East. Would not any other Power which had such an alliance feel it incumbent to have a number of officers in the Japanese Army and to receive Japanese officers in its own Army, which was the only way in which friction could be avoided? Yet there were only two or three British officers employed in Japan, and the Intelligence Department was so undermanned that it was impossible that it could be adequately represented in a matter of such vital interest. Besides such matters in which an increased expenditure must be incurred, whatever scheme was adopted, there would, he thought, be some further increase in pay, as, for instance, the pay of non-commissioned officers.

Then there was the question of food. The Committee which considered the food of the Navy, which was better than the food of the Army, laid down the principle that it was not good enough, and that it should be improved. If the War Office wished to attract a desirable class of recruits to the Army it would have to provide better food; and it was even more desirable to make a man comfortable in that respect than to give higher pay. It was certain that there would have to be an increased expenditure on food. Then as to horses. Everyone would admit that the Army would have to keep up a larger number of horses. Although they had been so grotesquely extravagant, they were always striving to save money in the wrong direction. For example, they went into war without quick-firing guns. His hon. friend the Member for Islington was a great economist, and took an active part on the Committee which was moved for by the hon. Member for Oldham. Sir Ralph Knox, who had so great a part in the creation of the War Office as it was, it might be remembered, told the country that he prayed for the day when mobilisation would be ordered, as then the War Office would confound its enemies and accusers. Sir Ralph Knox, replying to his hon. friend, showed that the refusal of the War Office to accept the pressure of the House of Commons in connection with quick-firing guns had been due to opposition in the War Office itself. Colonel von Lindenau said, before the Military Society at Berlin, as an explanation of the early misfortunes of England in South Africa, that—

> "Great Britain discovered that the oldest weapons are the most expensive."

The whole matter had been brought home to the conscience of the nation and the House of Commons because of the increased, and rapidly increasing, cost of the present system, and also because the country and the House of Commons saw that whatever was done by individuals in gallant service in South Africa the Army did not fulfil the expectations entertained of it, and that the military system had practically broken down.

The responsibility for change must rest on the Cabinet as a whole. A revolutionary reform of the Army could not be looked for to the War Office alone. If the House of Commons simply cut off the money, the War Office would not cut off expenditure in the manner desired. It was the Cabinet, as a whole, that could force the War Office into a better system. An hon. Member asked the Prime Minister the other day whether the observation of the Council of Defence—which the Prime Minister went out of his way to tell the country had been re-constituted two and a-half months ago—would be available in connection with the present year's Estimates, and whether there might be some result of the co-ordination of the two services, to which the House of Commons attached so much importance. The hon. Member and the House generally was disappointed when the right hon. Gentleman stated that the Estimates for the present year had been prepared before the re-organisation of the Council of Defence; and it would, therefore, be thirteen months before they saw on the Estimates any good results from the co-ordination of expenditure between the two services, which the House of Commons and the country so thoroughly desired. He himself was not disappointed in that part of the Prime Minister's reply in which he said that, of course, the Cabinet could not be responsible for the details of the Estimates. Of course it could not. They could not take the responsibility for the details away from the Financial Secretary to the War Office, or from the Secretary to the Admiralty; but what the Cabinet could do, and what the House of Commons expected it to do, was to lay down, as general principles, what he believed the majority of hon. Members were agreed upon; that the expenditure on the Army was only a sign of the unfitness of the system of which they complained, and that the primacy of the Navy should be secured. Departments were rather apt to shuffle off responsibility from one to the other. Some of them thought that their responsibility was actually to the House of Commons itself. Before the Hartington Commission, in 1888, Sir George Tryon said—

> "The responsibility of the strength of the Navy rests with Parliament, and not with naval men."

He himself thought that the responsibility rested with the Cabinet, for it was the Cabinet alone which had full knowledge before it, and which could accept the general guidance and direction of Parliament, which Parliament would try to give it. Before the Committee on National Expenditure there were allusions to "the limit" of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which was the old-fashioned system of telling the Army and the Navy that they must not exceed a certain figure. When Mr. Smith was Secretary of State for War he said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer informed him that he would have to take off half-a-million. That was not the way in which they wanted the Cabinet to proceed in the future. The general guidance of the House of Commons had now been pretty freely expressed, and the Cabinet should show that it had some notion where it was going, and of the principles which guided it. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, he was afraid, was in the old rut on this question, declared that the Army should not be allowed to go beyond £30,000,000, and that he did not see why there should be an increase in the shipbuilding Vote. He did not think that that would suit the House of Commons at all.

The old revolutionary reformers and the new reformers always recognised the primacy of the Navy in Imperial defence, and held that it was what the country could afford to spend on defence, over and above that which was necessary for the needs of the Navy, that must be allotted to the Army. It was held, too, that in the Army the preference in expenditure should be given to the active, striking forces, as compared with other arms who could not go abroad. He was sure the country would never grudge expenditure on the Navy or on a small effective Army suited to the needs of India and our Empire. On these points there was, he believed, general concurrence, however Members might vote in the division, in the principles which had been put forward by the reformers in their recent speeches in the country. The War Office clung too strongly to a policy of which they had a large example in the course of the Colonial Conference, and a small example in the correspondence between the Secretary for War and the States of Jersey which was published in Jersey last Tuesday, the day on which the States met. The right hon. Gentleman told the States that unless they adopted the conscript Militia, of 1,800 men, they having offered 1,000, he should take away the garrison. The States having come over to his terms, the right hon. Gentleman wrote, under date February 13th, that the defence of Jersey would be recognised, and the present garrison would remain, conditionally on the new Militia Bill being accepted. The Secretary for War then, as in the document laid before the Colonial Conference, begged the whole question of the command of the sea. The question of invasion lay at the bottom of all the talk of conscription, and this question affected the number of Regulars at home, as it did also the linked battalion system. The linked battalion system, though beautiful in theory, had never worked in practice, and probably never would. The endeavour to have one battalion at home for every battalion abroad led to the Mediterranean being counted as being at home, and then Egypt, and now it was proposed to count South Africa. Perhaps some day India would be counted as being at home. The Secretary for War told them last year that in hit scheme he allowed for the permanens retention of twelve battalions, or 15,000 men, in South Africa; but now, in answer to a question, he said that 30,000 would remain there.

MR. BRODRICK: I said temporarily.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman expected to reduce the 30,000 men to twelve battalions by March; if not his scheme would be further broken into. The working of the linked battalion system reminded him of *The Times* average of harvests in this country; every year *The Times* published a statement as to how much the harvest was above or below average, and if they looked back for fifty years they would find that the harvest had always been below average. The normal year of the system never came. He had no doubt the right hon. Gentleman would be able to tell them that recruiting had improved owing to the adoption of the the three years service. But he believed a year's service for our Regulars could be worked so as further to swell our Reserves in time of war. Some were afraid that such troops would be Militia; but it must be remembered that Frederick the Great fought battles with an infantry—always recognised as among the finest that had ever fought—the overwhelming mass of whom were Prussian Militia with one year's service. Of course, the men must be sandwiched with men of greater experience, and there must be a professional type of officer such as we could and must create. Mounted troops, of course, could not be too well trained, but, as regards infantry, a great deal could be done with short service with professional officers.

A book had recently been published describing the training of officers at the military college of West Point. Comparing the Sandhurst system and Sandhurst results with the West Point, the results of the Sandhurst training contrasted unfavourably with those of the West Point Academy in regard to the professional nature of the officer. Our officers were gallant, and had often redeemed what might have been great disasters in South Africa, but no man could shut his eyes to the fact that our officers were not professional in the sense that they might easily be made out of the material we had in this country. The moral of this Motion was the country wanted to get what it paid for. It was willing to pay, as it did, an enormous amount of money provided that was assured. He did not see how the words of the Amendment could be denied; they were true. He was convinced that for a remedy they must look, not to the energy or administrative ability of this or that general or statesman, but to the House of Commons, which could influence great politicians to take a vital interest in the question. He hoped the Prime Minister would rise to the height of the responsibility which the present attitude of the House of Commons threw upon him.

*MR. BRODRICK: The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down began his speech by referring to what appeared to him my misfortune in being made the subject of attack in many quarters on the question of the condition of the Army. If I had been free from such attacks, I should be different from every one of my predecessors, from Lord Cardwell downwards, who have ever attempted to do anything for the Army. The only possible way for a Minister standing in my place to stand absolved from severe criticism and attack is to leave things absolutely as they are, to allow the Army to drift, and to be content to leave it to those who come after him to fill up gaps which have arisen during his term of office. From the moment I took up the position in which I now am, I felt that, at whatever personal cost, that line was one which neither the duty I owed to this House nor the expectations of the country could allow a Minister to adopt at the present time. But I am fortunate in this that, at all events tonight, we are challenged by a direct vote on a direct issue of broad policy, and not one of small personal objections or of details on which so many debates in this House have proceeded — but on an issue going to the root of the matter. I say I am fortunate in that. And why? Because no two of my critics ever agree on any single proposition which is put forward in criticism before the House. My hon. friend the mover of the Amendment laid down as one of the foremost points of his argument, that with the existence of a powerful Navy we did not need to provide specially for home defence. [Cries of "No."]

*MR. BECKETT: Not by a Regular Army.

*MR. BRODRICK: He went further than that, because my hon. friend the seconder took occasion to dissent from him.

*MR. BECKETT: I corrected him.

*MR. BRODRICK: All I can say is, I stand on the recollection of the House as to what my hon. friend said.

*MAJOR SEELY: I accepted the correction.

*MR. BRODRICK: His proposition in the first place was against the necessity of sending a Regular Army abroad; and secondly, he discussed the various positions that a regular army might occupy abroad; and then he came to another defence at home, and I imagine that he has only now joined the Member for the Isle of Wight if he says he is prepared to rely on citizen soldiers for that army. If that is his proposition, how does it square with the proposition of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, who, supporting the Amendment from an entirely different standpoint, said that for the defence at home he was afraid of cutting down?

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: No.

*MR. BRODRICK: He was afraid the Government would cut down exactly the force it was most necessary to maintain.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: No, I said there might be a danger of cutting down that which ought not to be cut down—stores, guns, and horses. I did not mean the defence at home.

*MR. BRODRICK: But stores, guns, and horses are exactly the items which make the increase in the Vote. What the right hon. Gentleman has always pressed on the House are the artillery of the Regular Army for defence in Great Britain, which my hon. friends the Member for Whitby and the Member for the Isle of Wight declare to be unnecessary. There is an absolute divergence between the two. The right hon. Baronet laughs at that.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Yes, because I have urged an increase of field artillery, but never for the purpose of home defence.

*MR. BRODRICK: I beg the right hon. Baronet's pardon. He, among many others, was urgent in pressing on the Government when our large force had gone to South Africa that we were left without home defence in artillery.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I have pressed two things. I have pressed for an increase of field artillery, but not for home defence, and with regard to home defence I have suggested a mixed system of Volunteer field artillery—with some partially paid men.

*MR. BRODRICK: In that case the right hon. Gentleman differs from those who have spoken to-day in that he does not think the field artillery of the three Army Corps that we have, and which we sent to South Africa, is sufficient, because he thinks a larger field artillery is necessary for striking purposes abroad. But that is exactly the proposition disputed by the hon. Member for Whitby, and also by the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight. ["No."] You cannot under any circumstances bring the opinions of any two critics into line with each other. Take those who have chiefly criticised the War Office scheme in the course of the last few months. We have heard to-night those who think that the Regular forces are too many. I remember many eloquent speeches of the hon. Member for Great Yarmouth who considers that our force for striking abroad is not too large, but, if anything, too small. That school of thought may not be popular at this moment, but there was a moment two years ago, as I will point out directly, when it was not only popular, but it was the only voice heard in this House. Then again, the hon. Member who addressed us so movingly about the Volunteers, told us we should depend on a citizen army. I was struck by those speeches, because I do not believe that any man of military training will get up and tell us that if this country is to be defended at all—of course if there is no question of defence, if the Navy can entirely preserve us, then it is immaterial to consider whether the 200,000 Volunteers are trained or not. But if we do contemplate any active resistance by Volunteers, then I say there is no man of military training who will stand up in this House and tell us that we can depend on a mass of Volunteers, not sufficiently equipped with artillery, not supported by regular cavalry, and not trained up to the point which the Commander-in-Chief, or any other military authority of weight, considers would entitle them to be put into the field to meet a foreign force, without that further training which my hon. friend the Member for the Isle of Wight denounced the Government for having tried to impose. You cannot have both propositions at once. I would remind the House that among our critics there is a very considerable school of thought who consider that we are asking too much of the Volunteers, and that we ought to replace that demand on the Volunteers by using the ballot for the Militia, and not merely place on the men who will serve an additional liability in order to compensate for those who will not. Those are propositions which it is not possible for a Minister of War to bring into line.

Once more, we have heard a good deal about the recruiting difficulty. On that I should like to say a word, and give the fullest statistics to the House. Nearly every proposition which has been put forward entirely loses sight of the recruiting difficulty. An able writer in *The Times* has distributed the Army according to his taste and fancy. He has put a large number of men in South Africa, more in Australia, more in Canada, and more in India; but it does not seem to have occurred to him that out of 180,000 men he has planted 140,000 out of this country, so that every man the moment his recruit-drills are over would be spending the whole of his service outside the United Kingdom. I can only say I have to look at these matters, not from the point of view of some ideal scheme, but from the point of view of what you can do with a voluntary Army. If I were to rely on all the diverse exhortations and inconsistent advice I have received to-night, and on other occasions, I should have to declare that in a multitude of counsellors there is not wisdom, but chaos. What I cannot but feel is that I have a right to ask the House to go back, first of all, to the circumstances under which the Army was re-organised, and to consider what has happened since then to cause so radical a change in the opinion which has been expressed this afternoon. I should never have thought that the experience of the Boer War, bitter as it was, could have been so speedily forgotten. I cannot say that I feel that in any one of the expressions which fell from my two hon. friends there appeared to be any recollection whatever of the straits to which we were put for Regular forces in 1899 and 1900. What was the impeachment of the Government? I was not then Secretary for War, but I believe I heard every word of every debate in this House, and certainly no one read more of what was published in the country. What was the impeachment of the Government—not from one side only, but from all sides? It was that we had no larger force of Regulars to send to South Africa, that we had not sufficient supplies for an army of 200,000 when we had never professed to send abroad more than 70,000; and, still more and constantly, that what forces were left at home were without artillery and without organisation, which the War Office ought to have provided even after the 200,000 men had gone abroad. No man voiced that general feeling of the country more eloquently, or more continuously than did Lord Rosebery. I hope the House will allow me by a few very brief quotations to support the views which have been so much forgotten this afternoon. Lord Rosebery, speaking on 15th February, 1900, used these words:—

> "I do not think the Government have the faintest notion of how in the country, in the streets, in any place where men congregate, the feeling of crisis, of over-burdening crisis, of constant danger, is present to the minds of men. I call for timely measures; this"—and he repeated it three times—"is a matter of life and death to the country."

Contrast that with the language used tonight by my hon. friend the Member for Whitby, who read to us a quotation, I believe twenty years old, from Lord Roberts, saying that Lord Roberts never contemplated that the Regular Army would be sent in large numbers abroad; and my hon. friend thought, after our experience of two years ago and after that crisis, that an opinion expressed twenty years ago, before many of these Transvaal questions had ever arisen or attained the position they finally did, governed the matter. Again, my hon. friend spoke of the Indian frontier as a bug-bear, and he cited, amidst the approving cheers of the Opposition, the statement of a Russian general who had spoken to him and who had treated it from that standpoint. I hardly think that those citations were worthy of the dignity of the rest of his speech. In any case I do not think that they can be conclusive to the House of Commons. It was not only Lord Rosebery who called us to account in this matter, and said that our forces were not sufficiently great. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, speaking on 12th, February 1900, said:—

> "We hear no complaint of the manner in which that Army of 180,000 men has been sent to the other end of the world without hitch or difficulty, an army well found, well fed, well armed, well hospitalled—if I may coin a word—with all that is required for them. All that can be said of the present Army is that it is not large enough for the task it is called upon to perform."

At that moment we had either sent to South Africa, or there were leaving the country, 120,000 Regular soldiers, and before we concluded the war we had to send 130,000 more. Now I am impeached, and even by the right hon. Gentleman himself last year, for providing 120,000 men to go abroad in certain contingencies, and for being prepared to keep up the necessary drafts for them. Let those who doubt whether that represents the present feeling of the country recollect what occurred later in the war. When we had got on to the month of August, just before Parliament adjourned, a very serious speech was delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Fife, who fell in with both the Leaders in the Upper House and in this House, and said that—

> "Although the Government had sent an enormous force, we wished to be assured that there would remain in the circle of military action, for the purpose of concluding the war, such a force of mobile and efficient troops as were adapted to the end in view."

At that moment nearly 200,000 troops had left this country; and yet tonight 120,000 men are looked upon as a grandiose provision, got up by a Minister who is making a splash by providing

Army Corps which can never possibly be used. I go on four months further—to November, 1901. I was then responsible. I can remember that there was hardly a newspaper, certainly not a public speaker, who did not allude at that moment—when matters had not proceeded well for some months in the Transvaal—to the fact that we were come apparently to the end of our resources, and vehemently attack and impeach the Government for their supineness in not having provided a larger number of Regular troops. I was pressed at that time to go and make a speech in the City of London; and I remember perfectly well the effect created the next day when I was able to assure the country that we could still send, if necessary, 50,000 Regulars. And we did send between 30,000 and 40,000 more Regulars before the close of the war. I put this crucial question. My hon. friend the Member for Chester is going to invite the House to declare that the amount spent on the Army is excessive. I should like to know whether my hon. friend would have gone to his constituency in the election of 1900 and put that proposition before them. If he would, I will undertake to say I would have stood against him in his constituency and have turned him out by a large majority.

*Mr. YERBURGH (Chester) said it was quite true that the proposition as put by his right hon. friend would not be accepted by the people of Chester; but the point they were making was, not that they were not to provide a large army in the course of conducting a great war, but that they were not entitled in times of peace to overload the country with taxation.

*Mr. BRODRICK: We are to have the men in time of war; we are not to provide them in time of peace. We are to declare in this House what we will do if we are attacked, but we are not to ask for supplies to make good our position. I am afraid my hon. friend would not convince his constituents if anybody who takes the view I do had an opportunity of expounding the other side of the question. What is the other side of the question? The reason why we are impeached tonight is not because we have provided a large army abroad only, but because we have organised our forces at home. Now, there was nothing on which so strong a feeling was expressed two years ago as on our want of organisation at home. Every speaker who attacked the Government spoke in that sense from both sides of the House. Lord Rosebery complained: "How was the body of 409,000 men in this country composed and organised?" The right hon. Gentleman complained that all the staffs were "scratch" which had been sent out, and those who followed him complained that no staffs, "scratch" or otherwise, were left at home. My hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty, one of the severest critics of the Government in military matters for many years, said that the whole Army had gone out of the country, and the problem was to make an army to take its place. My hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury said—what I am bound to repeat because I believe it represented the views of nearly everybody at that time—"What we want in the country now is an army, and not a mob." The proposal of my hon. friend the Member for the Isle of Wight, who has attacked us for having attempted to organise the Volunteers is that we should rely, not on an army, but on a mob. (Cries of "No.")

*Major SEELY: So gross a perversion of my words I must ask the House to be permitted to gainsay. I said that if you frankly approach the people of this country they will organise themselves, not into a mob, but into a most formidable force. I never suggested a mob.

*Mr. BRODRICK: They must be organised. If you are to organise you must allow the military authorities to have something to say to the organisation. Nobody denies that the Volunteers are a most valuable, a most self-denying, and a most important force in an organisation for home defence; but if the military authorities say you require something more than they can give, then we are told they are being discouraged. The attack my hon. friend made was on the system by which the Volunteers are asked to give some additional services, in order to form the first line of defence side by side with the Regulars; and I join issue with him because he used an expression which I do not think is justified, either by the attitude of the Volunteers or of the Regulars. He said twice that the Regulars were annoyed at being joined by the Volunteers. I am quite certain of this — that those reflections are unjustified. We have had no difficulty whatever in getting the Volunteers who have joined the Field Army Corps to give the service which it is necessary for them to do in order to take their part in the organisation. We have had a difficulty to bring a body of Volunteers upon whom large demands have been made. We must discuss that question more at length than I can do it now. I can only say that in every respect sympathetic treatment will be given to the Volunteers. We cannot expect to keep their numbers up to the full numbers at which they arrived during the excitement of the war; but to suppose that anything will be done to prejudice or permanently to reduce the normal numbers of that great force is, I am quite sure, to misunderstand the desires of those who are now advising me.

Now the position we are come to is this. We are attacked to-night for the large numbers we have sent abroad; we are also attacked for the organisation at home. The right hon. Gentleman told the House the other night that the Army Corps Scheme was a panic scheme. Well, Sir, I am quite certain the view which I represent to the House, the view that we were short of Regulars, the view that we were not organised at home, did not simply represent the panic of any Minister, but they were repeated over the whole year with so great a continuity and force that I am entitled to believe they represented, at all events at that time, the determined judgment of the nation; and I think the Government who have undertaken this task of Army reform are entitled to take the experience of 1899 and 1900, to some degree, with regard to the measures which they have now put before the House. Now, I want to clear away one fallacy. It is supposed that the great increase of expense, the great increase in numbers, is due to this Army Corps Scheme. That is not the case in the least. These Army Corps are only the organisation of the forces already existing. We filled up the deficiencies of mounted troops; we filled up the supplies, the deficiency of which had been made apparent in 1900.

But if there is anybody responsible for the considerable increases which have been made in the numbers of our military forces, it is those who in this House pressed upon the Government year after year, with great force, that the weakness of our home battalions prevented their efficiency; that their numbers had not grown with the work which they were called upon to perform abroad; that there was a deficiency in field artillery, to which the right hon. Gentleman called attention time after time; that our cavalry regiments were not sufficiently strong in men or in horses; that the departmental corps had been starved. These propositions were brought forward by military Members of this House over and over again, and I acknowledged the force with which they pressed these considerations on the Government. Now, the action taken with regard to them was not dictated either by the Boer War, or by fear of the Boer War. Of the 54,000 men who have been added to the Regular troops since 1896, 6,000 were added in 1897; 17,000 in 1898, before there was any question of the Boer War; 25,000 were added in 1900—at that time there was, undoubtedly, a call by the country for a largely increased force, and a complaint was universally made that the number was not greater—and in 1901, when I introduced the Army Corps Scheme, there was an addition of 5,000 men. It is absolutely impossible to charge to the Army Corps Scheme more than 5,000 out of the 54,000 men added to the regular Army in the last six years.

Now, Sir, I am afraid I must trespass for some little time on the House, but there are considerable questions of policy with which I have to deal. What was the object of the Army Corps Scheme? I cannot describe it any more clearly than I attempted to do when I first introduced it to the notice of the House. As regards the troops, it was not a scheme for adding enormously to the Army, but it was a scheme to establish a standard up to which we could work, and by which we could know what remained to be done. When hon. Members see the White Paper which was circulated today, they can see that it will show in normal times — these are scarcely yet normal times — exactly what units are included in each Army Corps; and Parliament can at any moment say, "We are not prepared to vote so many corps. We do not need this amount." Nothing has been done, nothing has been prepared, which prevents the authority of Parliament from being exercised in that manner. The main portion of our business was to organise districts and to obtain a large measure of decentralisation. That, at all events, has been accomplished. If the troops have to be employed in war they will no longer be hastily gathered together under a number of different commands, and under officers whom they have never seen before. The men will come from the same command. The stores and clothing they require are with them, and they have not got to be sent for in a hurry from Woolwich and embarked, perhaps, on different ships. The proper proportion of various arms are being brought together in the various commands wherever we have to fight, except on very small expeditions; and this is the chief thing, if ever again we have to send a great force abroad, the organisation is now being established which will at least give us the nucleus of an organisation at home.

Now I am asked to say how this business is proceeding, and I would ask the House in all fairness to recollect that this scheme only obtained the assent of Parliament twenty-one months ago. It is only in the last eight months that the war has been over. During the whole of that time, whatever view you may take of the War Office, you can hardly deny that it has been subjected to a strain such as no Department of this country has ever before undergone. Therefore, though I claim that the scheme is far advanced, I am the last man to say that that, or anything else connected with the Army, has yet become perfect. First let me say one word as to the term "Army Corps," on which so much language has been expended. I believe that term to be a convenient term, because, if you call a body of 30,000 troops a Division, when it is four or five times the size of a Division you come to a nomenclature which is inappropriate. I believe the term is consonant with the collection of troops which we bring together under the name, but the actual term is itself unimportant as compared with the organisation which it represents—the gathering together of the proper number of each command under the same commander, and the giving to one man the power to overlook and oversee all the generals under him in his own district. Of course a great deal has been made of the term as a slavish imitation of foreign countries. I might say with regard to that, that in the introduction, and even in the debates, of this system, the whole question was tried by our own experience and our own requirements, and I am a little inclined to accept what fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition the other day, when he stated that he did not think there was much to be gained in exchanging sneer for sneer with some of our foreign neighbours. I think, therefore, that one or two recent speeches, in which these Army Corps were jibed at on the ground that they were of German origin, might well have been omitted, the more especially as the smallest exploration of history would have satisfied anybody that, Army Corps were not of German origin, that all the commanders at the beginning of last century—including Wellington, who had two commanders of Army Corps at Waterloo—took their inspiration from the Emperor Napoleon, who, whatever else has been said of him, has never been alleged to have been a German. I can only say that I stand by all that we undertook in this matter, and I will give the House briefly the result so far as we have gone. These districts have been organised in three instances. We propose to put Lord Grenfell in charge of the fourth on the 1st of April. [Laughter]. That merriment is partially caused by the fact that an uninstructed speaker said the other day that Lord Grenfell would have nothing to command but himself, though, no doubt, he was a host in himself. Apart from other units, there are at this moment in the district to be commanded by Lord Grenfell no less than 90 battalions. Of course a large number of them are Volunteers, but there is nothing in the world that we desire so much as to bring our hightest military officers directly into contact and make them directly responsible for these large numbers of battalions of Volunteers. There is nothing we care so much for as the advice we have received from the commanders of the Army Corps as to the relative value of the auxiliary forces in their districts, and I am quite certain that the charge we are giving to Lord Grenfell would be considered worthy of the acceptance of a general of his position in any country.

What is the result as it stands? We have organised these districts. The barracks are not yet complete in some of them. These barracks, however, I would remind the House, are not the wasteful expenditure which my hon. friend the hon. Member for Whitby represented. It is simply an expenditure to house troops already voted by Parliament. If Parliament reduces the number of troops, then the barracks will not be required. But as long as we have the troops we have a right to come to the House for barracks for them, and those barracks, as long as I have anything to do with the matter, will be placed where the different proportions of the different arms can be advantageously grouped together for common training. It is said that although we may organise these corps, we cannot keep up their strength by voluntary recruiting. I confess that the question of recruiting has given me, like every preceding Minister of War, the greatest anxiety at different times. Our normal recruiting used to be 35,000 a year. In 1900, under the stress of war, it went up to 45,000, and in 1901, it was about 46,000, in each case with a lowered standard. The larger numbers in those two years were probably prompted by the excitement at the moment, and the keenness of young men to offer their services during an emergency. I told the House last year that we required 50,000 men, not to carry out my scheme, but to secure the number of recruits necessary to keep up the number voted by Parliament in 1897, 1898, 1899 and 1900. I have seen it stated all over the country, that the Army is greatly below its number, and that it is almost at the vanishing point, that the Reserve has sunk from 80,000 to 30,000 men. The whole thing is a delusion. I do not know to what it is due that our recruiting has been so great. The net pay in 1896 was 7d. a day. By giving them mess allowance of 3d. we raised it to 10d. a day. The 2d. voted immediately last year brought it up to 1s., and on the 1st April next year, every soldier of two years service who re-engages to complete eight years will get 1s. 6d. a day. Surely those changes must make a considerable amount of difference. I think, too, something is due to the additional comforts given to the soldier, and something to his improved tone and status, to which no one has more contributed by his efforts than the present Commander-in-Chief. A certain amount of extra recruiting may be due to the falling off of employment. But, be that as it may, not only are the results satisfactory, but all the calculations which we have formed as to the number of men who at the end of the war would be weary of the profession and buy themselves off, perhaps with the gratuity at their disposal, have been falsified. The result has been this, whereas in previous years of peace we got about 35,000 recruits, and thought ourselves lucky if we went over that number, and took one-third as specials, last year was the biggest recruiting year we have ever had in this country. We took nearly 51,000 recruits, of whom about 16 per cent. were specials. The result of that is that, so far then from the Army being enormously under strength, excepting the infantry of the line, we are over strength in every single department of it. The household cavalry are a couple of hundred over strength; the cavalry of the line are 7,400 over strength; the field artillery, 3,000 over strength. but the infantry of the line are about 2,600 under strength. When you divide that, however, between sixty or seventy battalions at home, it is only an average of thirty or forty men per battalion. The Army Service Corps is 800, and the Royal Army Medical Corps 1,600 men above strength. For the first time in living memory, the Army, which had been raised by 54,000 men on the establishment since 1897, and which should stand with India at 259,600 men, now stands 271,800, or 12,000 men above the strength. That 12,000 will probably be reduced by

6,000 in the course of the next few weeks, owing to the return of time-expired men from India and their inclusion in the Reserve.

That enables me to deal with the question of weakly recruits. I admit that during the war our lower standard brought in a certain number of men of this kind; but we have been enabled to raise the standard for the artillery by one inch, for the engineers by one inch, for the Army Service Corps by one inch, and to stop the recruiting altogether for the cavalry and all specials taken from the infantry. The Militia recruiting has been very brisk, and has enabled me to raise the Militia standard by one inch.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman say what is the standard in the Army for the infantry at the present moment?

MR. BRODRICK: The standard is 5 feet 3 inches, and there will be no specials taken. The standard for the Militia will be raised to 5 feet 3 inches. It has for a long time been 5 feet 2 inches. We are also endeavouring to make character an element in recruiting. Inquiries as to character have been instituted with considerable advantage in many districts. Quite apart from justifying the scheme which is the subject of debate, it would be very difficult with these figures before the House for my hon. friend to declare that there is no proportionate gain in strength or efficiency for the money we have been spending. My hon. friend spoke as if the Army was armed and equipped for anything except war, and spoke of the Army Corps as if they existed only on paper. I can only say that the figures and facts I have given are a refutation of these assertions.

And now, I want to ask the House to consider briefly what has been done in the way of decentralisation. We are told that the Army system is where it was two years ago; but I believe no army system has ever undergone so great a change as ours has during the last two years. Not only have we decentralised the responsibility of generals, but we have even decentralised the audit of accounts, which is now carried on in three of the districts in close proximity to the general commanding the corps. No longer is it necessary for the general commanding an Army Corps to refer to the War Office about all trivial matters. He arranges for the training of recruits and only guides us as to their value. I cannot go into details, but I may say that delegation has not only begun, but it will in a few years be the keynote of our Army system. If I can claim to have changed a centralised system into a delegated system, I think I shall have made a change which has been pressed on this House, in season and out of season, for the last twenty years. With regard to the proportionate sum we are spending, the House gave us authority to raise eight garrison battalions. Six of these are already raised, comprising 6,000 men. I believe that no finer nor more useful battalions for their purpose ever left this country. We undertook to raise five Indian battalions. This force also is in working order. We undertook to raise the Yeomanry from 10,000 to 35,000, and to equip them as mounted troops for home defence. My hon. friend the Member for the Isle of Wight left this out of his contention just now. We had 10,000 and we expect to have 29,000 in the present year. We also undertook to deal with the question of military intelligence and mobilisation. Now, different speakers have assumed that this point has been neglected. My hon. friend said we were starving the brain of our Army. There is no foundation whatever for that statement. I quite admit I cannot go the pace—I do not believe the House would wish me to go the pace—of those who are urging that we should establish a general staff such as there is in Germany, which might cost as I see from some estimates £500,000 a year. We should need justification far beyond any which has ever been put before us for so reckless a change. One speaker said there was but one officer, and another hon. Member gave us credit for two. As a matter of fact, in 1896 there were eighteen officers in that department, drawing altogether £10,500 a year. This year the number has been increased to more than double, at more than double the expense. A considerable number of extra clerks are employed, and a further development of the department is in contemplation.

What is far more important is that the head of that department, instead of being one of the subordinates of the other departments of the War Office, as he was, is now on a par with the highest officers in the War Office, except the Commander-in-Chief. He draws pay, which is one of the things that show his position, equal to that of the Adjutant-General and the Quartermaster-General. Instead of living in Victoria Street he has been provided with accommodation at Winchester House, for immediate consultation with the War Office, which is constantly needed. I do not see why hon. Members should laugh. The best place for that is in close proximity to the War Office. Early last year when it was said that the head of the Intelligence Department was in a flat in Victoria Street there were roars of laughter. [An HON. MEMBER: "They are all flats."] At all events, pending the establishment of the new War Office, this important functionary has been brought into the closest possible touch with the War Office. What is more, he is a member of the Council of Defence, and as such now occupies perhaps the most important military position of any man except the Commander-in-Chief. Having said so much I hope it will not be contended that we have neglected the Intelligence Department.

I will say one word as to the question of stores. One of the great complaints in 1900 was that we could not mobilise an army of 200,000 men for lack of the necessary stores, which had to be ordered in a hurry. We have taken account of all our requirements. A committee made large recommendations, which have been carried through, and the sum—2½ millions—which stands in the Estimates of the coming year, and which will be claimed from the House this year, will complete these stores, with the exception of a very small sum. We shall not have to incur that charge in future Estimates. That brings me to the question of cost. I will put it very briefly to the House. We have been told that £10,000,000 is an addition, and that we have for this extra expenditure got no sufficient addition of efficiency or strength. How has that £10,000,000 gone? You have had an increase of 54,000 men and 11,000 Colonial troops. Those 65,000 Regular troops have among them absorbed in pay, in the extra prices paid for food and fuel for the whole Army, and in the improved scale of clothing for the whole Army, £5,000,000. Five millions out of ten have, therefore, gone in charges you can strike out by a stroke of the pen, if you decide to reduce your army in numbers. I want to make it perfectly clear that it is not a question of the War Office squandering money. You can put your hand on the charge and, if you can induce the Government to do it, you can reduce it. There is no difficulty about that. We have been told in past years that our horses were not sufficiently numerous. We have added 11,000 horses in all, including these required for seventy batteries of artillery. That is a charge of £450,000. The Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers have absorbed among them £1,250,000, and stores and clothing account for nearly £2,500,000. That is a charge which will mainly cease after the present year. The medical service absorbed £200,000, and manœuvres £170,000. There have been three charges over which we have no control—the interest on works loans, the subsidies to India with regard to Aden, which were adopted in this House and were finally placed on the War Office, and the non-effective charges due to the war—pensions to men and to officers—which have absorbed another £1,000,000. Those charges together represent the whole £10,000,000 of increase. I desire to put this statement before the House, because if it is determined to cut down the Army Estimates it will see where the operation is to begin. I wish also to state that we have not said our last word as to the cost of the Army by giving these figures. I have referred before to the consciousness I had, perhaps more than any man in this House, that the time would come when the House and the country would grudge this great expenditure and call for a reduction. The policy which I have asked the House to pursue—the policy of the three years system—was specially designed, among other things, to meet that difficulty. I was blamed the other day because I did not introduce the three years system in 1901. My conduct was treated as a death-bed repentance. The circumstance of adding to the soldiers' pay, from which you can never recede, and the reduction of the years of service, giving, as they do, so large a responsibility as to drafts for India, are things which I do not think any man could be expected to undertake without the most careful consideration of the matter by all the authorities. I took fifteen months to think it over, and I trust the House will, therefore, wait a little longer to see the result. The main result is an economical result—the shortening of the service.

What I think should be the aim of this country is to keep the minimum of soldiers with the colours, and a maximum of Reserves. The Reserve is our first line as much as are the soldiers with the colours. Of the Reserves all sorts of doubts have been expressed, but they have been resolved by the late war. Ninety-six per cent. of the men came up, showing that we can count upon their service. Regiments, we were told, when filled with 50 per cent. of Reservists would not be homogeneous, and would not be equal to other regiments. These regiments were sent to Natal, and I ask any man whether any regiments could have fought better? I say the principle of a Reserve having been once firmly established, this three years system will, if you choose to permit it, make your Reserve half as large again, or possibly even double as large, and will enable you to dispense with a considerable number of men on the active list. If you are willing to bear the burden of the additional men on the active list, and the full number of recruits for three years longer, your Reserves will mount up to 100,000 men, and then the Minister who may be in power can decide how many he will take at £60, and how many he will substitute for them at £9. I look forward to an improvement in the *personnel* of the Army, not so much to a reduction of the total number of the establishment, and by the realisation of the three years' system to the maintenance of a large Reserve with the minimum of numbers with the colours. Therefore, I hope the House, when it comes to review the Estimates for the year, will enable us to show not only what is the present charge, but what is the charge we may hope for in the future, the requirements and possible economies, and also the estimated cost to the country.

Now a few words as to the position in regard to the Amendment. I do not challenge in the least the right of those who are dissatisfied both with the number of troops we propose to send abroad and who consider our Army is dangerously strong, to vote against us. I do not challenge the same right of the right hon. Gentleman opposite who said last year that three Army Corps specially allotted and prepared for active service abroad were unnecessary, and he added politically undesirable; though I shall be prepared to show that the weaker your Army the greater your danger from foreign complications, and above all that the Army which is simply in numbers and not organised for fighting is the greatest embarrassment to your Foreign Minister, who may trade upon the numbers and not be aware that the organisation which is to make them good is incomplete. But I am asked, Where is this Army to be employed? A few years ago we should never have thought that we should send twice that number to South Africa. I decline to accept my hon. friend's statement that the North-West Frontier of India is nothing but a bugbear. I say that our preparations for the defence of our greatest dependency must be judged upon expert advice, and we should not forget that for a much smaller dependency we had to send double the number of troops. I hope that in the discussion the question of policy will prevail, and that prejudice against the War Office may be allowed for the moment to stand aside. I know how difficult it is to ask this; I know how great has been the unpopularity, the inevitable unpopularity, which those connected with the administration of an Army hastily improvised like ours for the Boer War—how great is the unpopularity they must incur. Let me take one point. There is not a day passes that I do not receive letters from officers who have gone out suddenly and obtained commissions and have done invaluable service with the Irregular Forces, and who have come home asking at least for employment in the Regular Army, if they can have no other recognition, that they may not go back and stand by the side of their fellows bearing no mark of what they have done in the war. We are now 600 or 700 officers above strength, and we have no Parliamentary power to commission a large number of men who have come out after a few months' service, good though that has been. I can assure the House I have never had a sadder task than that of telling so many of these men that it is impossible for us to help them. About 9,000 or 10,000 officers have been mentioned in despatches, and we have given recognitions to 2,800 by honours or promotion, and it is impossible to submit further names to the King. Every man who comes in that way, and those around him, go away with germs of bitterness against the War Office for accepting their services and not being able sufficiently to recompense them. What is true of the officers is true also of the men. As the House knows, 80,000 men had to be discharged, and had a right to be discharged. We did everything we could for them; we pressed for employment for them, we offered them the right to go back, on such terms as had never before been offered to the Army, for a year, and with right to leave when they obtained employment. We get some 3,500 letters a day, and an enormous proportion of those are from men who have complaints that are out of the power of the War Office to meet, and that leave the writers with bitter feelings. Only within the last few days it has been put to me almost as a right that some 2,000 workmen employed at Woolwich during pressure of work should be retained in employment though the reason for it had ceased. Of course, it is out of our power. May I say, on the other hand, that no tact on the part of a Minister, no diplomacy, no administrative ability can possibly avoid the feelings that are excited by our impotence to help either officers or men who have suffered in consequence of the war? I ask the House to consider what is the effect of Army reform generally.

Much has been said to-night about reforms which have not been made, and nothing about those that have been made. We have carried out to the full the proposal that officers should be selected for commands, and that commands should not go by seniority. Every officer you select for a command leaves nine or ten men disappointed. It is impossible to carry out the principle of selection and yet be popular. Only the other day, in the cavalry, Lord Roberts put forward three or four men who had done remarkable service in the war, but they were all comparatively junior officers. I believe they were rightly placed, and I supported their appointment. We desired to cast no slur on older officers who may have been passed over for these particular commands; none the less, one cannot help feeling that the Army Corps system has acted to the detriment of a good many of them. Remember, commands have been given, perhaps rightly given, in the past to men as reward for past services, and not in expectation of future service. Men who have passed long periods of their lives in the Army legitimately aspire to commands, and are from that standpoint disappointed when a command is given to a younger man likely to serve again in the field. In the same way with decentralisation. Men come to me with complaints in reference to re-enlistment, furlough, lodgings for married soldiers, and when referred to the general officers commanding, they say I am shirking my duties and laying them on somebody else. There is no more unpopular thing than decentralisation when it comes to details. In principle it is cheered, in detail it is odious. I was surprised the other night when an hon. Member who came to me on a case of this kind accepted my statement and applauded it. It was the first time it had happened. However we may deal with the Auxiliary Forces, which in a voluntary army are so important an element, any pressure, any change, any attempt to get more efficiency which presses hardly upon individuals causes an immediate outcry against the War Office which is voiced in this House. I ask the House to remember that these are not legitimate grounds on which the system or strength of the Army should be discussed. Nobody knew better than I did—and I spoke to the House about it two years ago—that reform of the Army, by whoever it was taken up, would probably prove to be so unpopular a task as to imperil the Minister who undertook it. I had no delusion on the subject. However famous, however distinguished a Commander-in-Chief under whose auspices such action is taken, the bulk of the responsibility and of the unpopularity must fall on the Minister who undertakes it. I do not suppose many men are conscious how much they are influenced with regard to the strength of the Army and the system of the Army by the treatment which they receive from the War Office in matters which concern them. I urge that we should deal with this subject on the highest plane. I approach this Army question solely from the point of view of Lord Rosebery when he stated that national defence was a question of life or death. I ask the House to reflect that it is not only an important, it is a complex and difficult Question. I earnestly believe that we have in our present Army system a sound and necessary policy. I know that the *personnel* is daily growing more efficient. I can show that the material of war of all the forces that have been organised is now provided, and we are setting up a standard which will never, I trust, be cast down. If we succeed in our object it may cost the existence of one Minister; but that Minister will not have suffered in vain. But I would urge that the House of Commons should look at what has been proved, and consider the shortness of time, and approach this subject from the point of view that it is easier to change the number to be provided, if you change the basis on which they are to be provided; but that if you proceed to upset the ground work of the system, you will not only temporarily weaken the forces of the Empire, but set back the clock of Army reform for ten or fifteen years. It is from that point of view, and because I believe no Minister who ever brought a scheme before the House, could show within two years so large an amount of success, and no scheme ever bore the fruit of expectation so soon as this, that I unhesitatingly submit my policy to the verdict of the House of Commons.

*MR. YERBURGH, whose opening sentences did not reach the Gallery, was understood to say that the House would agree that his right hon. friend was heartily to be congratulated on the defence he had made. With one point, however, he could not agree. His right hon. friend had said the weaker our Army was, the more danger there was of foreign complications. He had always understood that the great factor in preserving European peace was the strength of the British Navy; he had never heard that the strength of the Army was to be considered as the determining factor for defending this country. Everyone agreed with his right hon. friend in the view that what they wished to secure was the improvement in the material of which the Army was composed, but they did not agree that it was necessary to have so large a number of men with the colours as his right hon. friend had stated. Upon the broad policy which he wished the House to discuss, the right right hon. Gentleman found strong variations of opinion among those supporting the Amendment. With that statement he could not agree, because all who had spoken in favour of the Motion had stated that the great objection to be taken against the Army Corps system was that the defence of this country was in the first place to depend on the Navy; they also agreed that the Navy had first call upon the country; therefore, he did not think the Secretary of State for War was justified in saying there was no common ground in support of the Amendment. But his right hon. friend went further; he had endeavoured to make good that not only had they no common ground as to the Imperial aspect, but that they did not agree as to the details of the Amendment they presented. That was not the case, because both the mover and seconder committed themselves to the proposition that what was required was an effective and mobile army, not too large, to strike on the other side of the water to complete the work of the Navy, and beyond that a small army was required for the defence of this country in the temporary absence of the Fleet.

His right hon. friend had apparently taken a different stand from that taken by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland when he represented the War Office in this House, that the Government did not aspire to emulate the vast armies of Continental Powers, and "that it had intentions of increasing the Army in order to protect these islands from invasion by soldiers instead of by ships." So far as he could understand, the Minister for War considered in 1901 that the home Army should be strong enough to meet organised invasion from abroad, which was a very different thing; that the foreign service Army should be employed with the army of any country we might be allied to, and take part in military operations with them, and exercise such functions as were exercised by military forces on the Continent. There was a distinct difference of principle between the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, speaking for the Government in 1899, and his right hon. friend, speaking in 1901. On the one hand, we were to have a foreign army, not to compete with foreign nations, and a home army to defend this country from a raid. On the other hand, his right hon. friend considered our foreign army was to compete with continental armies, and our home army was to be such as to be able to resist an organised invasion of this country.

*MR. BRODRICK: I never said a word suggesting that our Army should compete with continental armies, or contend with them. What I said was that it might be necessary to send a large force to protect our great dependencies, and that for home defence we were bound to depend on an efficient home force.

* MR. YERBURGH pointed out that in March, 1901, in the debate on the Army Estimates, the right hon. Gentleman had stated that we had commitments with two continents besides Africa, that there were dangers of European entanglements, and had said that it stood to reason that if we had allies none of them would be prepared to turn out every man they could muster and allow ours to rest at home. Did his right hon. friend still contemplate having to defend this country against organised invasion?

* MR. BRODRICK: I said we were bound to have an efficient defence for these islands in case of the temporary absence of the Fleet, and to that I stand.

* MR. YERBURGH said that if he understood his right hon. friend to say he did not desire to employ this large army at home for the purpose of resisting an organised invasion from abroad—if that was the case, his proposition was altogether too excessive. Why build up so great an army if it was not intended to resist organised invasion? This was a most important point to be considered. If his right hon. friend reflected, he would see that so long as we had to contend for the supremacy of the sea, and so long as that was in doubt, for so long must the Army remain at home. It could not be sent abroad until freedom of transport for the Army was secured.

* MR. BRODRICK: Why should not war have broken out when we were in South Africa?

* MR. YERBURGH thanked his right hon. friend for the interruption. He would say why. Because we had the Navy to fall back upon. That showed that our strength was the Navy and the Navy alone, and that therefore we did not require this large force at home to repel an invasion that was not possible. His right hon. friend said that if he had gone down to his constituency and suggested that they had too many men that he would have found his own constituency against him. That, however, was not the point at issue. If they were engaged in a great European war they would have ample time, before the affairs of the Fleet were settled, to manufacture a defensive army. [MINISTERIAL laughter, and cries of "No, no!"] His hon. friends laughed at that statement, but did anyone suppose that they were going to decide a large naval quarrel, and dispose of a naval power like France within a short space of time? There would be ample time to manufacture an army before the Naval issue was decided. They had heard from various speakers that they could rely upon Volunteer effort, but he submitted that the true defence of this country was the Navy, and what they could spare after the Navy had been provided for should be spent upon the Army. They ought not to spend more upon the Army than was consistent with the efficiency of the Navy. The scheme proposed by his right hon. friend was too large in its character. They all agreed that they needed a mobile, effective Army, but their contention was that the Army provided by this scheme was far too large. The Army for home defence ought not to be too large; it should act completely by itself, and be composed of Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers, and such an Army, properly officered and released from the control of the War Office to as large an extent as possible, should be placed under the authorities of the various counties, and that was the kind of force they required for home defence. Holding

those views, and holding them very strongly, it was impossible for him to vote against this Amendment.

His right hon. friend's scheme, he believed, was radically unsound, and would saddle the country with a number of men far beyond their requirements. He believed this scheme would give them an army for foreign service largely composed of immature boys, and the right hon. Gentleman's proposals in regard to home defence did not go to the root of the matter. The right hon. Gentleman was, so to speak, tinkering with this question. His arrangements with regard to the Volunteers were admirable in design, but they would not work. The right hon. Gentleman's intention was to make them a better force, but he did not recognise that the root of the whole difficulty was not the want of patriotism, but the hard fact that Volunteers were unable to afford the money in order to obtain the necessary training. For those reasons he believed his right hon. friend's scheme was radically unsound, and although he was not prepared to vote for the Amendment under these circumstances, he certainly should not vote against it.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said he was pleased to hear the satisfactory returns which had been placed before them in regard to enlistments. All who spoke upon Army matters in the House foretold that the improvements of pay and the option given for the short term of enlistment would do much for recruiting, and he was pleased to see that it had turned out so well. He failed, however, to see where this great system had made any great alterations. They had a great deal more to pay, but it was perfectly useless to talk of Army reform unless the increased expenditure was met by more economical treatment of things which existed already. They had seen recently numerous cases in which the War Office and the Army were extravagant. They were penny wise and pound foolish, and kept a most strict account of such small matters as officers' cab fares, upon which they wasted a great deal of energy collecting.

The new scheme meant an increase in the number of general officers and staff, and this staff would be purely ornamental. The Secretary of State told them that there was nothing in the term "Army Corps" and that it was not borrowed from Germany. It certainly was not a German expression, but the Germans had made an Army Corps a fixed number of troops, and that was what was being done by this scheme. The extra officers would make a considerable difference when they came to pay them. How could they call anything a proper Army Corps which had as many as eighty battalions of Volunteers in it. They were told that each Army Corps was to have a fixed number of cavalry and infantry in proper proportions ready to move, and be mobile, with medical stores, but now they found that General Grenfell had just been appointed to an Army Corps which included 100 battalions of Volunteers. Could anything be more absurd than to call that an Army Corps? During the ordinary manœuvres they had an Army Corps for about a month, but what was the use of spending all this money upon a body which existed only in a concrete form for one or two months during manœuvres. He agreed that there would be a number of infantry battalions to make up the Army Corps, although even the First Army Corps did not seem complete yet. As for the Return which had been given them today he thought it was absolutely the vaguest ever issued anywhere. Take, for instance, the infantry of the First Army Corps. It said, "Required, twenty-five battalions; available twenty-four." Some of the troops were now on their way home from South Africa, but where were the rest? What was the strength of them? It did not say one word about them, and the Press seemed to have much better information upon this question than the War Office. In the *Sunday Times* he found an accurate account of the state of the battalions in the First Army Corps, and apparently they could only muster about sixteen battalions out of twenty-five. He wished to know how many of those sixteen battalions were fit to take the field. A battalion might be perfectly useless unless the men were fit to take the field. If half of a battalion were recruits, and another 20 per cent. of them were unfit for various other reasons that made the battalion 50 per cent. below war strength, and instead of having 800 or 1,000 men they might have only about 250 men in a battalion fit to take the field. He was afraid that several of these battalions were in that condition. They had got absolutely nothing for their money, except an increased number of recruits and horses. That was not in his opinion a reorganisation of the Army, nor was it in any form a reform of the Army. It was a mere change of names. He wished to say one word in regard to this decentralisation. He did not think the Secretary of State for War had gone very far in this direction. Take a place like Dover. If £5 or £10 were required for Army purposes the general was first asked about it, and then he had to get the sanction of the War Office. Now Dover had been decentralised, and before this money could be spent the general commanding at Dover had to be asked. He could give hundreds of these cases throughout the country.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton), asked whether the hon. Member would substantiate the case.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said it was best not to substantiate cases, because, if he did so, those who had given the War Office away would get into trouble. He had not come across a single case in which a matter had been hastened by the nominal decentralisation of the Secretary of State. He would like to see the right hon. Gentleman go on with his scheme and effect any sort of Army reform, provided that increased economy accompanied increased expenditure, an essential of all reform, but one which had not been shown to have been achieved in any single department. The time had come when the nation would no longer spend the money it had been spending on the Army; retrenchment must come, and if it could not be managed where it ought to be, he was afraid essential parts of the Army would be taken away. When the House of Commons voted, as it probably would in a year or two, for a reduction of the Army Vote by so many millions, the Secretary of State would be unable to take away a certain number of men, because to do so would upset the whole scheme or leave him absolutely with skeleton battalions. Therefore, if the House determined to reduce the Army Estimates, some fresh scheme would have to be devised, unless the Secretary of State added to his present scheme something which would effect some economy and make it a real reform.

*COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square) said he was unable to support the Amendment. He had listened very carefully to the speeches of the mover and seconder in the hope that they would give some indication of what the "needs of the Empire" really were. Probably few Members other than Ministers or ex-Ministers had any idea of what those requirements might be, and it was not the business of Members to declare the organisation to be unsuitable when they did not know the nature of the requirements. The Council of Defence was being reorganised, and on those requirements being explained, it would be for them to issue advice upon which the necessary forces would be organised. They had been told that the scheme was extravagant, that Army Corps were unsuitable to the conditions of the country, and that "Army Corps" was an undesirable foreign term. But no alternative scheme had been put forward. Hitherto the Army had been divided into district commands—ten in England, one in Scotland, and four in Ireland—which varied in area and importance. Some were commanded by lieutenant-generals, some by major-generals; some had no cavalry, and some no artillery. There was no organisation whatever about those commands. One thing, if nothing else, could be said about an Army Corps, and that was that it was a complete unit in itself, every branch of the service being properly represented in the proportion declared by experts to be required for active service. An Army Corps comprised, roughly, 40,000 men, so that this scheme of six Army Corps provided for 240,000, of whom 120,000 were Regular troops and the remainder auxiliary forces. That, in his opinion, was not an excessive army to maintain. It was sometimes said that they might not require to send so much as an Army Corps abroad. But it was just as easy to divide an Army Corps as a regiment of cavalry, so that if 20,000 men were wanted half an Army Corps could be sent, or if only 10,000 were necessary, a quarter of an Army Corps would be despatched.

The second part of the Amendment declared that no proportionate gain in strength and efficiency had resulted from the recent increases in military expenditure. A comparison of the Estimates of the year before the war and those of last year showed that there had been a considerable increase, the figures for 1899–1900 being £20,617,000 against £29,310,000 last year. But there had also been a considerable increase in the different establishments. With regard to the Regular forces at home and in the colonies, the establishment had been raised from 176,000 to 209,000; the Reserve had been reduced by the late war and would take a certain time to regain its proper strength; the Militia had increased from 129,000 to 131,000; the Yeomanry from 11,000 to 35,000; and the Volunteers from 264,000 to 346,000. Since 1899 there had been an increase of about £4 per head in the cost, but in view of the improved conditions of the soldier and the increased pay that was likely to accrue, he did not think there was much to complain of on that point. Therefore, as in his opinion neither of the propositions of the Amendment could be upheld, he should consider it his duty, both as a supporter of the Government, and as a soldier of forty years standing, to vote against the Amendment.

*MR. CLAUDE LOWTHER (Cumberland, Eskdale) said that while not in agreement with every detail put forward by the hon. Member for Whitby, he certainly agreed with the principle of the Amendment. It had always been his belief that the safety of the Empire demanded a small but efficient Army, and a large world-embracing Navy, so that he was bound to express his disapproval of the policy of the Secretary of State for War. But, if the Amendment were pressed to a division, he and many other Members on that side would find it difficult to decide which way to vote. If the division were taken merely on the policy of the right hon. Gentleman, he was convinced there would be a large majority against it. But the division would involve the fate of the Government, so that two impossible alternatives were placed before him. If he voted against the Amendment of his hon. friend he would be voting against his conviction. If, on the contrary, he voted for the Amendment he would be condemning to the best of his ability the policy of the right hon. Gentleman, it was true, but at what risk? At the risk of robbing the Empire of a Government which, although it did include the Secretary of State for War, the author of the scheme, included also the Prime Minister, in whom all on this side of the House had the greatest confidence, and the Colonial Secretary, on whose genius whole continents relied for their welfare and developments. Therefore he was unable to vote. If the Amendment was pressed to a division he would take no part in it.

*MR. WYLIE (Dumbartonshire) said he desired to say a few words on the Volunteer aspect of the question. They constituted an important portion of the defensive forces of the Empire. He had given notice of an Amendment to the Address setting forth—

> "that longer and more arduous training of the Volunteer forces is now being demanded without corresponding augmentation of allowances and facilities, and without due regard to the conditions under which they have to carry on their civil occupations, which, as was anticipated, has seriously reduced these forces, whilst the growing necessities of the Empire require a large increase both of their numbers and efficiency, which should be secured by a substantial increase of capitation and other grants, and of facilities and convenient arrangements for drill and shooting."

The Amendment now before the House was practically the same as that of which he gave notice last year, and which was unanimously adopted by eighty Volunteer colonels who came to London at that time to deal with the question of the crisis caused in the Volunteer force by the new regulations. At the desire of these colonels a strong requisition was made to the Prime Minister for the purpose of obtaining time to discuss this subject during the debate on the Address, and he very courteously arranged for this being done, but the exigencies of the Government in connection with the South African war prevented the debate from taking place. The most gloomy prognostications then made regarding the Volunteer force had been entirely fulfilled. In answer to the hon. Member for Sheffield the Secretary of State for War had stated that the decrease had been 38,000, and the deficiency in officers 1,895. He found from other sources that the resignations during the Volunteer year at 1st November were 65,000, and these resignations had occurred in every part of the country and in every branch of the service. The following are examples out of an enormous list. In the Artillery branch in Forfar the resignations were 353, in Durham 326, and in Dorset 271; in the Engineers, they were in Devon and Somerset, 355, in Gloucester 259, and in Middlesex 240; in the Queen's Rifles, composed of several Midlothian Battalions, 752; in Leicester 536, in Stafford 519, Welsh 511, and the 1st Lanark 486. These figures showed a very serious reduction in the Volunteer force, and it was the more alarming when they came to recognise the fact that during the last quarter of 1902 the total resignations amounted to no less than 29,000—at that rate the resignations for the year would be 116,000.

Under the new scheme it had been proposed to increase the Army to a very considerable extent, by increasing the pay of the ordinary soldier by about 40 per cent. It had been arranged to increase the Militia to the extent of 50 per cent., also by increased pay and allowances; and it was proposed to increase the Yeomanry by 250 per cent. by increased pay and allowances. He congratulated the Secretary of State for War on the very able speech he had made in defence of that policy, and its remarkably successful results. But very different indeed had been the action of the War Office towards the Volunteer force. Instead of having been encouraged and increased in numbers, they had been subjected to the most severe reflections by the War Office authorities — reflections which implied that they had never hitherto been considered as a serious part of the defensive forces of the country. Had the conduct of the Volunteer force in the field merited such severe strictures and such ungenerous treatment? He ventured to say it had been the very contrary. The Volunteer force in active service had received the warmest eulogium from every officer under whom they served. A very competent and of course disinterested continental critic had stated that the whole history of the war proved that they were possessed of the finest qualities of the Regulars, namely discipline and courage, while they had much more intelligence, initiative, and endurance. Besides that they had fostered a manly and patriotic spirit in the country. They had elevated the common soldier in the public estimation, and this had greatly facilitated the recruiting for which the Secretary of State for War had taken so much credit. They had besides contributed a very large quota of troops direct to the front. They had contributed largely to the Regular Army, to the Militia and the Yeomanry. The Volunteer regiments of the county which he had the honour to represent, not only sent to the front a full quota of men direct, but they had contributed fifty-four Yeomanry, forty-one Militia, and 216 Regulars. If the whole of the Volunteer battalions throughout the country had contributed in the same proportion, and he thought it was probable that they did, then the whole contribution of the Volunteer force was no less than 70,000 men. Under these circumstances, the action of the War Office in connection with the Volunteers had been most inexplicable and most discouraging, and he held that in connection with the recruiting for the Regular Army it had been most short-sighted. They had discouraged the force which had added, and would add, enormously to the recruiting power of the Army. The policy of the War Office in connection with the Volunteers during the last three years had been of the most vacillating and inconsistent description. In the beginning of 1900, when it was considered, that mounted men were not required in South Africa, the War Office encouraged a large increase of the Volunteer force. They encouraged the Volunteers to go into camp in large numbers by giving them a grant of a little under £900,000. In 1901 there came an entire revolution in the feeling of the War Office, which caused the issue of the celebrated Order in Council on the Volunteer force. The Volunteers were, of course, mortified by this change of policy on the part of the Government, and this feeling very soon found expression throughout the country and in this House. Recognising that they had made a mistake, the War Office convened a meeting of a few representative Volunteer colonels and immediately made some modification of the regulations. These modifications were approved by some Volunteer colonels in this House, but when they came under his observation he, on the first opportunity on the Estimates stated that they were utterly inadequate and had left things *in statu quo.* He was confident that when the War Office issued these regulations, they regarded a large reduction of the Volunteer force with equanimity.

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this evening's sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

BAKER STREET AND WATERLOO RAILWAY (TRANSFER.)

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Colonel Lockwood and Mr. Pym.

BARNSLEY CORPORATION (WATER).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Pickard and Mr. Joseph Walton.

BATH CORPORATION WATER.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Colonel Murray, Mr. Edmond Wodehouse, and Mr. Dickinson.

BECKENHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. H. W. Foster and Mr. Powell-Williams.

BILLINGSHURST AND DISTRICT GAS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Emmott and Sir Joseph Leese.

BLACKHEATH AND GREENWICH DISTRICT ELECTRIC LIGHT.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir John Willox and Mr. Kimber.

BRIDGWATER GAS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Alexander Acland-Hood, Sir Edward Strachey, and Mr. Edward Stanley.

BRISTOL, LONDON, AND SOUTHERN COUNTIES RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bigwood, Mr. Colston, Mr. Charles Hobhouse, and Sir Edward Strachey.

BURGESS HILL AND ST. JOHN'S COMMON GAS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Henry Fletcher and Mr. Goschen.

CASTLEBLAYNEY, KEADY, AND ARMAGH RAILWAY (EXTENSION OF TIME).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lonsdale and Sir James Haslett.

CENTRAL LONDON RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Asquith and Mr. Paulton.

CHARING CROSS, EUSTON, AND HAMPSTEAD RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Thomas Wrightson and Mr. Remnant.

CHESHIRE LINES COMMITTEE.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Alexander Henderson and Mr. Chapman.

CITY AND NORTH EAST SUBURBAN ELECTRIC RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Leigh-Bennett and Mr. David Morgan.

CLAPHAM JUNCTION AND MARBLE ARCH RAILWAY (No. 1).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lawson Walton and Mr. Fletcher Moulton.

COMMERCIAL GAS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir John Colomb and Mr. Kimber.

CORK HARBOUR.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Donelan, Mr. Crean, and Sir Robert Penrose-FitzGerald.

COVENTRY AND ARLEY RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Brand, Mr. Freeman Thomas, and Mr. Carvil.

COVENTRY ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Brand, Mr. Freeman Thomas, and Mr. Carvil.

DOVER CORPORATION.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. George Wyndham and Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.

DUBLIN, WICKLOW, AND WEXFORD RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. James O'Connor, Mr. Field, and Mr. Ffrench.

EAST ARDSLEY GAS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Barran and Mr. Brotherton.

EBBW VALE WATER AND IMPROVEMENT.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir William Harcourt and Mr. M'Kenna.

ERITH TRAMWAYS AND IMPROVEMENT.

Petition and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir William Hart Dyke and Mr. Henry William Forster.

FISHGUARD AND ROSSLARE RAILWAYS AND HARBOURS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Goulding and Mr. David MacIver.

GAS LIGHT AND COKE COMPANY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Alexander Henderson, Mr. Harris, and Mr. Alban Gibbs.

GATESHEAD CORPORATION.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir James Joicey and Sir William Allan.

GORLESTON AND SOUTHTOWN GAS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir John Colomb and Colonel Lucas.

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Alexander Henderson and Mr. Chapman.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY (No. 1).

Petition and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Strutt and Mr. Penn.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY (No. 2).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Strutt and Mr. Penn.

GREAT NORTHERN AND CITY RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Weetman Pearson and Mr. Claude Hay.

GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Goulding and Mr. John Gordon.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Brassey and Mr. David MacIver.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY (PENSION FUND).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Llewellyn and Mr. Baldwin.

GRINDLEFORD, BASLOW, AND BAKEWELL RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir William Holland, Mr. Henry Joseph Wilson, and Mr. Bolton.

HAMPTON COURT GAS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seale-Hayne and Mr. Skewes-Cox.

HIGHLAND AND INVERGARRY AND FORT AUGUSTUS RAILWAY COMPANIES (SUBSTITUTED BILL).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Bignold, and Mr. John Edward Gordon.

HUMBER COMMERCIAL RAILWAY AND DOCK.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Doughty and Mr. Chapman.

HYDE CORPORATION.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Chapman and Mr. Ashton.

KINGSTON-UPON-HULL CORPORATION.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Joseph Firbank, Sir Seymour King, Mr. Charles Wilson, and Sir James Woodhouse.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE AND LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAYS (STEAM VESSELS).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir William Hornby and Colonel Lockwood.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (ELECTRIC SUPPLY).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Burns and Mr. Bousfield.

LONDON HYDRAULIC POWER.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Frederick Mappin and Sir John Aird.

LONDON UNITED TRAMWAYS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Skewes-Cox and Mr. Remnant.

MARKET DRAYTON GAS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Colonel Kenyon-Slaney and Mr. Heath.

MERTHYR TYDVIL URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. David Thomas and Mr. Keir Hardie.

MIDDLESBROUGH CORPORATION.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Colonel Sadler and Mr. Herbert Samuel.

MIDLAND AND BELFAST AND NORTHERN COUNTIES RAILWAYS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Frederick Mappin, Sir William Coddington, and Mr. O'Neill.

MIDLAND GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY OF IRELAND.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. M'Cann, Mr. Patrick White, and Mr. Carvill.

MIDLAND RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Frederick Mappin and Sir William Coddington.

NEATH, PONTARDAWE, AND BRYNAMAN RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. David Thomas and Mr. Samuel Evans.

NELSON CORPORATION.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Shackleton and Mr. Mitchell.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE ELECTRIC SUPPLY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir William Allan and Mr. Burt.

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Wharton, Sir James Kitson, and Sir Edward Grey.

NORTH MIDDLESEX GAS.

Petition and Bill ordered to be brought in by Colonel Bowles, Mr. Joseph Howard, and Mr. Bigwood.

NORTH-WEST LONDON RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Price and Mr. Cautley.

PLYMOUTH CORPORATION.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Duke and Mr. Guest.

SCARBOROUGH GAS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Beckett and Mr. Compton Rickett.

SEAFORTH AND SEFTON JUNCTION RAILWAY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Austin Taylor and Mr. Hall.

SITTINGBOURNE DISTRICT GAS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Laurence Hardy and Mr. John Howard.

SOUTH SHIELDS CORPORATION.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Robson and Sir Charles Palmer.

SOUTH SHIELDS, SUNDERLAND AND DISTRICT TRAMWAYS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Guthrie and Mr. Seely.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE JOINT RAILWAYS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Wharton, Mr. Fielden, Mr. Fison, Sir Frederick Mappin, and Mr. Chapman.

STOKE NEWINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bousfield and Captain Balfour.

SUTTON DISTRICT WATER.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Keswick and Mr. Loder.

THAMES CONSERVANCY.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland and Sir William Tomlinson.

THAMES STEAMBOAT TRUST.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Alban Gibbs and Sir Fortescue Flannery.

ULSTER AND CONNAUGHT LIGHT RAILWAYS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Harrington, Colonel Saunderson, Mr. James O'Kelly, Mr. Murnaghan, and Mr. Archdale.

WALKER AND WALLSEND UNION GAS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Renwick and Mr. Crawford Smith.

WELLINGBOROUGH AND DISTRICT TRAMROADS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Guthrie and Major Seely.

WEST CUMBERLAND ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Helder, Colonel Bain, and Mr. Randles.

WEST HAM CORPORATION.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ernest Gray, and Mr. David Morgan.

WINCHESTER WATER AND GAS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Beckett Faber, Mr. Myers, and Mr. Nicholson.

WOLVERHAMPTON AND CANNOCK CHASE RAILWAY (EXTENSION OF TIME).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Charles Shaw and Mr. Walford Green.

WOOLWICH BOROUGH COUNCIL.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Lord Charles Beresford and Mr. Peel.

CROYDON AND DISTRICT ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS.

Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

HARROW ROAD AND PADDINGTON TRAMWAYS.

Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAY (VARIOUS POWERS).

Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

SHEFFIELD CORPORATION.

Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

STRABANE AND LETTERKENNY RAILWAY.

Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

THAMES RIVER STEAMBOAT SERVICE.

Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

WIGAN CORPORATION TRAMWAYS.

Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

ARMY ORGANISATION.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment [23rd February] to Main Question [17th February], "That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But we humbly regret that the organisation of the land forces is unsuited to the needs of the Empire, and that no proportionate gain in strength and efficiency has resulted from the recent increases in Military expenditure.'"—(*Mr. Beckett.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

*MR. WYLIE, continuing his remarks, said that with regard to the Volunteers the War Office fully realised that there would be a serious diminution in this valuable auxiliary force, because in an Order of Council they hadset out the fact that the new rules must affect a great many persons who would be prevented from joining, but he scarcely thought that they quite realised the fact that the enormous number of resignations would involve in many cases the extinction of the regiments.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman appears to be discussing not so much the question in the Amendment as the effect on the Volunteer forces of a particular regulation.

*MR. WYLIE pointed out that inasmuch as these regulations seriously affected the defensive forces of the Empire, he thought perhaps he would be allowed to show how these forces had been reduced, and what measures should be taken to prevent such reduction.

MR. SPEAKER thought the hon. Member would not be in order in continuing.

*MR. WYLIE said he bowed to the ruling of the Chair. The Secretary of State for War had, he thought, done exceedingly well for the Army; he had given a greater increase of pay to the private soldiers than any of his predecessors had given, and he had done well with the Militia, and had been liberal with the Yeomanry. He strongly urged the right hon. Gentleman now to turn his attention to the Volunteers and to regard them with the same consideration that he had given to the other branches of the Army. The changes the right hon. Gentleman had made in the Army, Yeomanry and Militia were extremely satisfactory, and had greatly disarmed the criticisms brought to bear against him in that House, but if he might make one remark. he would ask the right hon. Gentleman to restore to the Volunteers of this country those grants which had been taken away, and to increase the allowances and facilities for drill and shooting. If the right hon. Gentleman did that he would not only stop this diminution of the Volunteer forces, but bring them up to a state of efficiency which they had never before attained. He hoped this would only be the first step towards an enormous extension of these forces. The active force of the Volunteers should be brought up to 600,000 with a Reserve of 500,000, and a second Reserve of 1,500,000, and this could be done at an expense of probably six or seven millions, but certainly not more than £10,000,000. He was surprised at the criticisms of some of his hon. friends who sat on that side of the House as to the necessity of reducing the numbers of our Army. The size of our Army had been a matter of profound contempt among the officers of armies on the Continent. With an increased Volunteer force behind it, which could be effected with little expense because, as was well known, the Volunteer was the cheapest soldier in the world, the feeling of contempt would pass away. The Volunteers cost £6 a head. There was three times that expenditure in the case of the Militiaman and the Yeoman, and fourteen times as much in the case of the Regular. The expenditure on the whole Volunteer force was 30 per cent. less than the cost of two battleships, and about the same as that of 20,000 Regulars, and the value obtained from that expenditure was infinitely greater than would be obtained from adding two battleships to the Navy or 20,000 men to the Regular Army. Looking at the enormous expansion of the British Empire; to the great increase of Continental armies and navies; to the much greater contact we had with those countries in many parts of our dominions; and looking to the great lesson taught by the Boer War, namely, that those countries entertained the greatest jealousy and the bitterest hostility towards us, many military experts of this country considered the proposed increase in the Regular Army, Militia and Yeomanry was not at all sufficient for the purpose of the defence of this colossal Empire. He strongly urged the Secretary of State to take into his friendly consideration not simply the reinstatement of the Volunteers to their old position, but to increase the numbers in the way he had indicated. War among civilised nations was generally the result of foregone investigations, which had caused a nation to believe that the army it was going to oppose was much less effective and efficient than its own. If this country had such a Volunteer force as he had suggested, with the Navy we possessed, the Regular Army, and Yeomanry and Militia according to the forecast that had been made, we should regard any combination of the Continental Powers with comparative indifference. He hoped the Volunteer forces would receive from the right hon. Gentleman the consideration to which they were entitled.

*MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said this subject had been raised by that side of the House on which he sat on more than one occasion, but had never received adequate support from the opposite Benches. There was no desire whatever in the present discussion to make this a Party question, or any desire to criticise unduly the efforts made by the Secretary of State for War or the Commander-in-Chief. Every one was convinced that both the right hon. Gentleman and the Commander-in-Chief had done all they could to remedy a great evil. A contradictory issue was raised by the Amendment. He agreed with the contention that they had not an efficient scheme for the Army in the scheme proposed by the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the difficulty of dealing with the claims of officers and others who had served their country well in South Africa. There must evidently be a good deal of discontent under these conditions. The Army at no time was an easy subject for civilians to deal with. It was not only a question of those who were unable to find employment, but he did not think the Army as a whole was at all content with the Six Army Corps Scheme; and he was satisfied that the country as a whole was not content with it. And why? Because the public had realised how absolutely essential it was that we should have an invincible fleet, and it was convinced that more money would have to be spent on the fleet. The people also felt that taxation would have to be reduced, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given no encouragement that there would be such a reduction. Last September the late Chancellor of the Exchequer told them that, in his opinion, there should be a reduction on the Military Estimates of the present year, and that there would be such a reduction if the War Office properly expended their money. The right hon. Gentleman had compared the cost of the operations in South Africa under the control of the War Office with that of the cost of the Soudan War under Lord Kitchener and Lord Cromer; and he added that there was something wrong with the military element in the War Office. If they were to deal with soldiers they needed a great organising soldier.

The Secretary for War had spoken of the success he had met with in regard to recruiting. That was a very satisfactory part of his statement, but it would be dangerous to expect recruiting to be always so good as it was at the close of the war, in spite of the advantages which the right hon. Gentleman had offered to recruits. When the Six Army Corps Scheme was introduced, he thought that some form of conscription would have to be introduced as part of the scheme; but he did not believe that the public would ever agree to conscription until every effort had been made to meet the requirements of the Empire without conscription. Another difficulty in connection with the Six Army Corps Scheme was that of finding an adequate manœuvring ground. Many of them who had been at Aldershot knew that there was not sufficient ground there, and he believed that before long it would be found that the same remark might apply to Salisbury Plain. The right hon. Gentleman had gone to the South of Scotland for a manœuvring ground which he thought was better than anything they could obtain in the South of England. He, however, believed it was not possible to manœuvre these Army Corps in this island. He had read the scheme lately placed before them in *The Times*, and he did not think any one of them could fail to be attracted by the proposal that the First Army Corps should be moved from Aldershot to South Africa. None of them who were soldiers but would prefer if they were to begin their professional career again to go to India, or some other country where they would have some real opportunity for manœuvring; and that was what they would gain by having an Army Corps in South Africa.

Another point to which sufficient attention had not been given was the constitution of a great general staff. That he believed to be absolutely essential, and it would be cheap at half-a-million as compared with the expenditure of thirty millions without a general staff. He thought that a certain amount of the want of confidence which had arisen in the public minds was due to the fact that some of the recommendations in the Clinton-Dawkins Report which had attracted most attention had not been carried into effect. They had not one board but three boards, and anything more different from what came from the Clinton-Dawkins Report could not be imagined than the arrangement of the control of the Army by three boards instead of by one board, on the Admiralty model. So far as he knew the powers of delegation to be given to generals commanding districts, which had been recommended by the report, had not been distributed with a very lavish hand, although he understood that something had been done in that direction. President Roosevelt, in the speech which appeared in *The Times* of that day, had suggested a model of what the American army should be. He believed that that should be our model also that we should have a smaller army than that involved by the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman, that we should pay it more highly in order to obtain recruits, and that we should have a home army in different healthy portions of the Empire where it would be near the seat of danger. The scheme of the right hon. Gentleman as it stood was too costly for the country to bear, and would have to be modified.

*LT.-COLONEL GEORGE KEMP (Lancashire, Heywood) said that in speaking in favour of the Amendment, he knew he took up a position he had never before occupied. He had supported the Government hitherto, because he not only concurred with them in their Party politics, but because he believed that their general policy had been a benefit to the country and the Empire. But on this occasion he was obliged to part company with them. Feeling that this was a matter of great urgency, he conceived it his duty to vote, not with his Party, but for what he believed to be the best interests of the whole Empire. He would endeavour to point out to the House, in as few words as possible, how the first obligation of His Majesty's Government, the maintenance of the security of the Empire, had been imperilled and not advanced by the Army Scheme of the Secretary of State for War. It could not be said that the House had dealt in any niggardly spirit with the expenditure on the two forces, the Navy and the Army. Sixty millions, or £80,000,000 if the Indian Army was included, had been spent on the defence of the Empire; but the general principle raised by the Amendment was: Had this large sum been properly divided between the Army and the Navy? Seven years ago a Defence Committee was appointed to consider the relative needs of the two forces. They knew that that Committee allayed, for the moment, the apprehensions that were felt in every part of the country. Up to that time there had been no organised, no co-ordinated authority by which the relative forces of the Navy and Army should be considered. Had that Committee fulfilled the purpose for which it was appointed? The present Government was aware of the inadequacy of that Committee, because they had very rightly seen fit to reconstitute it, and strengthen it by the addition of naval and military experts. If that were the case, did it not follow that during the last few years, our position as an Empire had been imperilled by the inadequacy of that Committee? It was recommended by the Hartington Commission that that Committee should meet every year before the Estimates were prepared, so that the relative establishments of the two services might be considered.

It was quite obvious that as the armaments of other nations increased, so the needs of our two forces would also vary from year to year. Had they not the spectacle before them of a new factor in international affairs, a new naval power which had sprung up, and would continue to increase in strength? However genuine and sincere the friendship of the German Emperor might be for England, it was well known that the predominant feeling of the German people, combined with the increase in the naval power of that Empire, must be fraught with danger to this country, unless they were assured that steps were taken to meet any potential danger that might arise. What measures, then, had been taken? They had the famous declaration of 1896, when the Duke of Devonshire said that

> "The maintenance of sea supremacy had been assured as a means of Imperial defence against attacks from over-sea."

But was this Army Corps Scheme drawn up in accordance with the policy propounded by that declaration? He maintained that so far as they could judge from the statement of the Secretary for War, not only had it not been drawn up in accordance with that declaration, but in direct violation of it, and that the Secretary for War seemed even unaware of the views of the President of the Defence Committee, or else he acted in direct defiance of them. The right hon. Gentleman had said in his Memorandum to the Colonial Premiers that the number of men he asked for was 640,000 in time of peace, and that these numbers were "not deemed too large by our military advisers in view of the possibility of our at any time losing the command of the sea." The Duke of Devonshire's statement was in agreement with that of the Admiralty, which scouted a land defence, and presumed that we would act on the offensive at sea.

He had three questions to ask, and he wished an answer to them from the Secretary for War. First of all, had the right hon. Gentleman, before he brought his Estimates before the House each year, any directions or indications, based on the recommendations of the Committee of Defence, as to the scope of the duties of the Army; and secondly, if he had asked for these numbers and arranged for their general distribution in accordance with such directions. And thirdly, if he had not these directions, or any indication of their policy, on what basis had he formed the totality of his scheme? They had been asked in the present year to spend £29,000,000 on the English Army, and only £31,000,000 on the Navy, which was the first line of defence. They knew from the statement of the Prime Minister that the Estimates for the current year had not, on account of the matter of time, been put before the re-constituted Defence Committee. They were to presume that these Estimates were in accordance with the deliberate decision of the Cabinet. Were they not, therefore, justified in asking for a statement from the Prime Minister as to what the general policy of the Cabinet had been which justified this particular allocation between the two forces of the Navy and Army? And if no statement of that kind was made, he thought they were not going beyond what was right in saying that the present Army policy of the Secretary for War was in direct contradiction to the policy of co-ordination between the two forces. The next point was this: What was the origin of the peculiar form of organisation by which the Army was divided into six Army Corps? It was well within the memory of the House that the Secretary of State for War had quoted Lord Roberts on what he would call comparatively minor details. That was a practice which personally he objected to, because it might give the impression to people outside the House that the Secretary of State for War, who was responsible for policy, had sheltered himself behind his subordinates. He did not say that in any invidious way, but he disapproved of the practice. He should like to know whether Lord Roberts had given his direct approval to this particular Army Corps scheme? That was not a question of details, but of national policy.

*MR. BRODRICK: Most certainly.

*LT.-COLONEL GEORGE KEMP: Very well, but was it not a very remarkable thing that the Commander-in-Chief never made use of this organisation in South Africa?

AN HON. MEMBER: He never heard of it.

*LT.-COLONEL GEORGE KEMP said he should like very much to know whether Lord Roberts had ever been in an Army Corps himself, and whether, in any speech or writing, his Lordship had ever pronounced himself in favour of this particular unit either for war in other countries, or for peace training at home? Had he ever done that? Let them have a reply from a representative of the Government. If the Secretary for War said that he had the approval of Lord Roberts for his scheme, when did Lord Roberts' conversion take place? Was it since his return from South Africa, or was it at Madeira on his way home? He wanted to know the real origin of the Army Corps scheme, and whether it had the direct sanction and approval of the most eminent officers at the War Office. He had no acquaintance with these officers, but he should like to know whether any use had been made of the opinions of such men as Sir John Ardagh, Sir Evelyn Wood, or Sir Henry Brackenbury?

*MR. BRODRICK: Yes.

*LT.-COLONEL GEORGE KEMP said that they might then be satisfied, after the assurance which had been given, that this scheme had the direct sanction of military experts, and was not the product of a civilian. He was glad to hear from the speech of the Secretary of State for War that afternoon, that the introduction of this scheme was not the introduction of an article made in Germany, for if it had been, he must say that all articles made in Germany were not useful in Great Britain. He said that in no frivolous spirit; but he imagined that the success of the Army Corps system in the Germanic Empire must have been the reason for its introduction in England. He would point out, however, that the military necessities of Germany were quite different from those of England; the conditions of service were entirely different, and the analogy would tend to mislead the general public. But if it was said that this particular organisation was approved of by the military experts, where, he asked, was it possible in this country to manœuvre properly an Army Corps, as an army? Had it ever been done?

*MR. BRODRICK: Yes.

*LT.-COLONEL GEORGE KEMP said he believed it was tried in 1898, when Sir Redvers Buller commanded one corps, and the Duke of Connaught commanded another corps; but then it was more in name than in actual fact. Since the introduction of this scheme by the Secretary for War, could it be said that an Army Corps had been manœuvred against another Army Corps, so that the officers might be trained in the duties they would have to undertake in war? Could the Secretary of State tell them whether it was possible to manœuvre Army Corps in this country? If that were possible, as the Secretary of State said it was, he should like to know where?

*MR. BRODRICK: It was done in 1872 and 1874.

*LT.-COLONEL GEORGE KEMP said he would like to know where it was possible to manœuvre Army Corps in this country? One of the great arguments in favour of this system was that the general officers in particular would receive a training in their duties in case of war. He looked at the *Army List* for January, and he found that to the First Army Corps—which was the most advanced—only one brigadier had been appointed; yet he understood that the proper complement was to be six. If the contention was that their officers who commanded in peace should also command in their several capacities in war, how were they to reconcile it with the fact that divisional commanders were at the present time doing the work of the brigadiers? And if it were urged that the general officers were going to get extra training, he would like to know what kind of training they were now getting other than that given before the introduction of the scheme in 1891. He thought they also ought to know what was the difference in the work now being done at Aldershot and that prior to 1901. He was told—but perhaps he had been incorrectly informed—that the work going on there was exactly the same now as it was before the introduction of the scheme. If so, then he again asked, what was the advantage of the scheme so far as training of general officers was concerned? Next he came to the question of the men. They had been told that afternoon by the

Secretary for War that he had got more men than he actually wanted. How was it, then, that up till only a short time ago there were no men at all in the 3rd Division of the First Army Corps at Aldershot? The right hon. Gentleman's figures seemed to be very impressive, but where were the men?

*MR. BRODRICK: My hon. friend must be aware that during the last few months large numbers of troops have been coming back from South Africa, and, of course, the men cannot be at Aldershot and at sea at one and the same time. All the men I have named will be at their stations within a reasonable period.

*LIEUTENANT-COLONEL GEORGE KEMP said he would like to know if it would be contended that the First Army Corps could go out in a few months as an Army Corps as at present constituted.

*MR. BRODRICK: Certainly, with the Reservists.

*LIEUTENANT-COLONEL GEORGE KEMP said he must not be misunderstood to say that it could not go out as at present constituted because it had not got the Reservists, but what he wanted to know was whether, apart from the question of Reservists, it could go out, say, on the 31st March and engage in a war in any other country. His reply to that was that it could not, because it had not the necessary brigadiers and other officers, while the men also were not there. Under this Army Corps system were we any more forward than under the old system in securing an expeditionary force that at a moment's notice could leave this country? He held that we were not, as not a single unit in any Army Corps could be sent from these shores without calling up the Reserves. The system would not enable us any more quickly than under the old plan to send out an expeditionary force. They had been told that afternoon that one of the great advantages of this system was that by it they got decentralisation. He quite understood that it might be easier to secure delegation of the business from the War Office by having larger districts than they had before the Army Corps districts were introduced, and that to that extent decentralisation might be accelerated. The right hon. Gentleman had also informed them that the financial audits were not now held at the War Office but at Army Corps headquarters. But were not the references to the War Office as frequent now as they were before the financial clerks were sent down? It might be urged that the stores in these various Army Corps districts had been amassed. That, no doubt, was an advantage if the Army Corps was going out as an Army Corps; but if it were not, then there was no distinct advantage in having the stores amassed in their particular districts. Would it not have been possible to secure decentralisation to the extent they had done by districts instead of by Army Corps areas?

Something had been said about training. He would like to ask whether the present distribution of troops was an inseparable factor of the Army Corps system. Take the case of Colchester. Were the troops stationed there so that they might conform to Army Corps organisation? He happened to be there the other day, and he found there were three battalions of infantry, three batteries of artillery, a cavalry regiment, and other details at that station. He asked an officer. "Where is your training ground?" It was pointed out to him, and it had very much the appearance of a good cricket ground. He inquired further of the officer how he was able to train his men in the various arts of war in such a place; how, for instance, he could teach them to take cover, and the reply was that he told them to go behind some small ornamental trees on the fringe of the ground, and to pretend that the trees were bigger. That was the way in which they were taking advantage of the lessons learned in the South African War. Yet when they heard of men exposing themselves to the Boers as targets on the sky-line, with the result that regrettable incidents followed, they were at once asked what were the officers doing that they had not trained their men better. They might just as well go to Drury Lane Theatre and borrow a number of stage properties for use in training their troops as adopt the plan in vogue at Colchester. He was told that the only available ground for the cavalry to learn scouting was on the public roads, and that the local authorities were making up a Bill against the Government for damage done to the thoroughfares. Now, he wanted to know, were all those things inseparable from the Army Corps system? They might be told that large sums of money had been spent on barracks, but, if they had not a good training ground what was the use of the latest thing in barracks? He would like to take another illustration with regard to training grounds. He happened to be at Aldershot last year, at the training of a regiment of Yeomanry for South Africa, and he found that in the widely extended formations necessary, even with a very small body of troops, it was almost impossible to carry out satisfactorily movements which approximated to those on active service without finding the ground occupied by other troops. If that were the case when only a few troops were in training, what would be the effect when they attempted to manœuvre an Army Corps?

There was another question, which was still more important, and that was the cost. If the system were good, what was the cost of it? They were told it would amount to twenty-nine millions sterling. Whatever might be said about their having a sufficient number of men, he believed that at present they had only the skeleton formation without some of the vertebræ. But what would be the cost when the bones were fully clothed? It would undoubtedly be more than it was at the present time. When they were considering the vast question of expenditure they could not confine themselves to the needs of the Army and the Navy alone. The country was murmuring at the present time at the high taxation it had to bear. There were social reforms in urgent need of solution. There was the question of the housing of the working classes and of old age pensions, while on education they would have to spend increasingly large sums of money, and rightly so. Now, the proposition he wished to put was this: While these questions were calling for solution, while the country was demanding that they should be attended to, they could not possibly ask for enormous sums of money for the Army unless they could show that that money was urgently needed for the requirements of the country, and that it was rightly and adequately expended. More than that, he was afraid that if this expenditure continued to increase as it was now increasing the people would get disgusted with it, and in future years it would be difficult for any Government to bring forward a scheme which would adequately meet the requirements of Imperial defence, because the public felt that the money already voted had not been properly spent, and they could not be certain how it would be expended.

They were told by the right hon. Gentleman that he had got his men. He was prepared to accept that statement, although they did not know how the figures were arrived at, what they included, or what were the qualities of the men. But supposing the right hon. Gentleman had made that point good, supposing he had got his men, what were they for? Was it to engage in a Continental war? If so, he was perfectly certain that the people of this country would not tolerate that for one moment. Was it for home defence? If so, then it was in direct opposition to the policy enunciated by the President of the Defence Committee. If they were told it was to be prepared for wars like that in South Africa, if they were told that they wanted six Army Corps for that purpose, then he thought they ought to have a clear statement from a member of the Government of the policy which the Government was pursuing. It had been said that the policy of the Government was to maintain on the one hand an overwhelming Navy to meet the necessities inherent to the defence of these shores, and at the same time to maintain a large Army which would enable them to deal with a war such as that they had recently had in South Africa. If that were the policy of the Government, let Ministers say so clearly and frankly. They had heard a good deal that afternoon about recruiting; they had heard with great satisfaction that the results were very good. But he would like to ask whether, in the 50,000 recruits spoken of that afternoon, there were included the 5,000 yeomen who last year were enlisted under special conditions.

*LORD STANLEY: No.

*LIEUTENANT-COLONEL GEORGE KEMP said he was glad to hear that. They had got the quantity of recruits, but what about the quality? In the last recruiting returns there was a statement which would lead one to believe that the quality of the recruits educationally had improved. If that was going to be argued by the right hon. Gentleman, he ventured to say it was in direct contradiction of what he had himself heard. He had the pleasure of talking to a recruiting officer a little while ago, an officer who had passed a large number of recruits, and who had taken the trouble to examine them as to their educational qualities. His experience was that at least 50 per cent. of them were illiterate. No doubt they had been to school, but in the years intervening between leaving school and enlisting in the Army they had not taken part in any intelligent employment, and had apparently forgotten all they were supposed to have learnt. He thought that, in regard to that matter, they ought to have an authoritative statement from the right hon. Gentleman, because, unless it could be shown that the quality of the recruits had not merely not deteriorated but had tremendously improved, they would have failed to take advantage of one of the chief lessons of the South African War, a lesson which taught them that what they wanted was a higher class of men and more individuality of character. Unless the right hon. Gentleman could tell them that they had a much superior class of men, he ventured to assert that this present scheme was extravagant, because under it they did not get a due return from each man for the trouble and expense incurred on his behalf.

He had spoken rather longer than he intended, but there was one other point to which he could not omit drawing the attention of the House. The last and strangest feature of this scheme was that in the particular departments in which the Government ought to have been the least weak and the least niggardly, they had been the most niggardly. Where they ought to have spent money with a lavish hand they had absolutely stinted it. He referred particularly to the Intelligence Department. They had been told that afternoon that, two or three years before the Boer War broke out it would never have been anticipated that such a large number of men would be required. Why was it never anticipated? It was because they had not a proper Intelligence Department. The war was known to be inevitable. It ought to have been known to be inevitable ever since 1884, and that being so, if they had had an Intelligence Department worthy of the name they would have been better prepared for it. He wondered if the right hon. Gentleman had ever calculated how many millions he might have saved this country if he had borne this in mind. What was done? Only a short time before the war took place, and when the situation was most acute, what did they do? They sent out a handful of officers to gather information which ought to have been collected ten years before. Those officers did admirable work, they did everything in their power, and they ran risks to which they ought not to have been exposed. They did magnificent work, and was it not a terrible condemnation of the Intelligence Department and of the War Office that they should have been obliged to send out, at the last moment, these few devoted men to find information which ought to have been in their possession long before. Now, he asked what had been done to remedy that defect. They had been informed that much had been done, and that the Director of Military Intelligence had been put into a very high and responsible post. They were glad to hear it. But what else had been done? He would like to ask what had become of the body of men so admirably trained by Colonel Henderson in South Africa. Colonel Henderson gathered together some 200 officers for the work of the Department, but no sooner had the war ended than their services were dispensed with. Was that the way in which the Department was trying to meet the necessities of the case? He spoke somewhat feelingly on this subject. He knew that the maps which they had in South Africa were, at any rate so far as the Orange River and Cape Colonies were concerned absolutely useless and inadequate. That was not merely his opinion, it was also the opinion of those responsible for drawing up the maps. In one instance there was an inscription, "This map is not to be taken as absolutely accurate." There was no doubt a sombre humour in that, but that which might appear comic to the compiler was passing near tragic to the users. Some hon. Members had drawn a comparison between the Intelligence Departments of this country and Germany. Germany was practically surrounded by a ringed fence of armed nations, but the British Empire had to deal with problems of a unique character all the world over. If Germany met her needs by a large Intelligence Department, would this country not also adequately meet our needs by a correspondingly large Intelligence Department. It might be said that England had a small and Germany a big army, but was that going to be the measure by which they were going to determine what their Intelligence Department should be? It was because they had only a small army that they wanted an absolutely good Intelligence Department, so that an English force when it went abroad might be able to strike quickly and effectively.

As to the Volunteers, when the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight spoke of the unsympathetic treatment they had received, he could not help bringing before the House the fact that in Natal they only had one-third of the Volunteers from the Orange River Colony. And why? Because of the unsympathetic treatment they received. This was the same kind of official red tape which lost us, long ago, America. That was the attitude in 1754, and they had the same attitude from the War Office in 1900. That was the attitude which was responsible for giving us so few Volunteers in Natal, where the men were so anxious and willing to serve us. Anyone who had been in South Africa knew that they could not go to any considerable town there without hearing complaints of the treatment of the Volunteers from the Imperial Government. To all those arguments that he had adduced there was only one answer. What alternative had they to offer? The Secretary for War said that all the critics disagreed, and could not make any constructive policy. But he had no right to ask them to form an alternative scheme until they had a definite and authoritative statement from a responsible Minister of the relative needs of the Navy and the Army. Until this was done no one could propound an alternative scheme. They might indicate the general lines upon which they thought their policy should be carried out, but it was for the military experts to adumbrate the details of the scheme. They ought not to be asked for an alternative scheme until they knew what the respective requirements of the Army and Navy were. It was sufficient for him to know that they were face to face with a scheme which he felt that he had no alternative but to oppose with all the power he possessed. Holding those convictions he should be obliged to support them with his vote. He knew there were many people, both inside and outside of the House of Commons, who, upon this subject, would not openly oppose the Government, but he sincerely hoped that the time would not be long in coming when His Majesty's Government, whose high intentions and patriotism he admired as much as anybody, would realise that by the withdrawal of this wasteful and cumbrous policy they would best fulfil their obligations to the Empire and to the Crown.

SIR EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick): I do not rise for the purpose of occupying any great amount of time in this important debate, in which a great number of Members will be anxious to speak; but I think it is desirable that as many Members as possible should make it clear from what point of view they approach this question. The Secretary for War tried, I think not unnaturally, to rally his own supporters by presenting his view, which he undoubtedly sincerely holds, that those who are opposed to his Army scheme, and who are in favour of this Amendment, are not themselves agreed. Well, I do not believe that that is the case. The hon. Members who introduced this Amendment to the House stated emphatically that they did so for no Party reason, and that they desired that it should not be made a Party question. It is impossible, of course, for anyone on this side of the House to speak in support of it without giving any hon. Gentleman opposite occasion to say that we support it for a Party purpose. That is necessarily the case. But what I want to do, as far as possible, is to make it clear that we are sincere in saying that we do not support it for a Party purpose. The reason why we support it is not any difference of opinion whatever, or any special point of view of our own, or any Party purpose which we have to serve; but we support it on exactly the same grounds as have been presented to the House from the other side. It is not as if we differed, either on Imperial or strategical questions, from the point of view which the mover and seconder have presented to the House, but it is because we agree with them that we support their Amendment. On the contrary, I have never heard an Amendment which I thought was better launched in debate than this Amendment. The ground is covered with exactly the arguments which I should wish to use. The right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary of State for War, welcomed the debate because he said it raised a challenge of principle which went to the very root of the matter. The right hon. Gentleman really did not argue the question on that ground. What was challenged by the mover and seconder of the Amendment was the right hon. Gentleman's scheme—challenged, not in detail, but in principle. What was his reply? His reply, in effect, was that this scheme was doing very well. I understand the argument of the supporters of the Amendment to be that the right hon. Gentleman's scheme is wasteful, because it is aiming at something which is not suited to the requirements of the country or the Empire, and that because it is wasteful it is dangerous. The right hon. Gentleman's reply is that the country should give him more time, and then he will establish his scheme, and the country may be sure of having to pay for it. That is why I do not want to go over the ground which the right hon. Gentleman took—that the recruits were coming in well. I do not dispute that for a moment, but that does not meet our point. Our point is that his scheme is one which, if well filled up, is not suited to the country, and which is dangerous because of the expense it would involve. The right hon. Gentleman says that recruits are coming in well for his large Army scheme. From where are they coming? From our population. But the right hon. Gentleman is drawing from our population in the same way as the Navy. Has it ever occurred to the right hon. Gentleman what are likely to be the requirements of the Navy in future years? If he raises the terms for the Army, and makes it more attractive, and succeeds in getting more recruits for the Army, he is dipping into precisely the same bucket as the Navy. Really, the question which the House has to consider is how many men this country can spare to devote themselves to the profession of arms. That is the real point you have to consider—not how many men you want for the Army, but for the Army and Navy combined.

When I hear that recruits are coming in well for the Army, I wonder why. Presently we shall have Estimates presented for the Navy based on this, that the Navy has been obliged to raise its terms. That brings us to the real point which, I think, underlies the apprehension and the anxiety which the House feels, and it is this: Has the Government really considered any settled policy of national requirements? Is there a real controlling opinion which has settled the policy of national defence and decided what part the Navy must play and what part the Army must play? That has not been done by the Committee of Defence as established previously. If it is going to be done by the new Committee of Defence, it is a fact that this Army scheme has been produced without that body having had an opportunity of considering such points. The mover and seconder raised a real difference of principle—not so broad as this one I have laid down—with regard to the Army at home, and that was that even if you had to consider the military question without considering the great naval question which lies behind it, there ought to be a clear separation between the Imperial Army to be used for purposes abroad and the military forces which you have for defence at home. That was the idea that ran through the speeches of the mover and seconder of the Amendment, and it is one which has been developed with, I think, a most admirable attempt to apply a thinking mind to this question in a series of articles in *The Times* newspaper. These speeches and those articles are really the first attempt we have had before this country to think the question out. They are the work, no doubt, of individual minds. We may all of us differ in certain details from the proposals which have been put forward. But they are a real attempt to think the question out; and we have not yet had from the Government any sign on their part that they have devoted their mind to thinking out this military problem in the light of the present needs of the Empire. What the right hon. Gentleman's scheme is going to give us, it seems to me, is the largest possible Regular force in Great Britain, where it will not be wanted for military operations and where it cannot be satisfactorily trained.

Most of us in this House must speak as laymen; but nobody can have listened to the hon. and gallant Member who has just sat down on the subject of training alone without feeling what an unsatisfactory training-ground this country is for the sort of purposes for which the British Army is likely to be wanted in the Empire. The hon. and gallant Member who has just sat down laid great stress upon the necessity of having a better Intelligence Department. That is one of the points to which attention has been drawn—that we have not a proper staff organisation or an adequate Intelligence Department, and that the brains of the Army are being starved. What is the answer of the Secretary of State for War? He said: "Would you have a general staff like that of the German Army, costing some half-a-million a year?" Perhaps not; but what does he propose? He says he has increased our Intelligence Department at home, and it is now to cost something like £25,000 instead of £10,500. It has been more than doubled at rather more than double the expense. Is that really what is to be put against the general staff of the German Army costing half-a-million? Without going so far as half-a-million, there is a great difference between half-a-million and £25,000. I admit that the German Army is on a scale entirely different from our own, and that what the German Army may require is not necessarily any gauge of what we require for our Army; but I am not sure that in proportion to the size of our Army we do not require a larger thinking department even than the German army. The problem of the Germans is a simpler one, though they have to deal with a much larger army. We have to consider a far larger part of the globe, and conditions differing far more widely than those which the German army is called upon to consider. The essence of our case is that we may be called upon to undertake military operations in widely different parts of the world, in widely different conditions, which ought not to require more than a comparatively small force, but, in order that they should be successfully carried out they require great knowledge and great preparation. Though our Army must always be infinitesimal in comparison with the great Continental armies, it does require in proportion, I think, even a larger thinking department, because of the variety and uncertainty of the conditions which we have to deal with.

The mover of the Amendment made a very interesting suggestion that Army expenses might be very greatly reduced by considering the troops in South Africa as being on the home establishment. The right hon. Gentleman replies to that by saying if that were done we should never get recruits. Well, it is the experience of many of us that a great number of people are anxious to get to other parts of the Empire, at any rate, to see what openings there are there. I must say the advantages of South Africa as a training-ground are obvious. Even if it proved to be the case that we could not get recruits for a large part of the Army if such a place as South Africa were regarded as upon the home establishment, at any rate the attempt should be made; for I am not at all sure that the right hon. Gentleman is right in saying that recruits would not be forthcoming if they knew they were to be sent to a part of the Empire where the climate is good, the country large, with great possibilities, opportunities for experience, and possible openings such as men would not come into contact with at home. At any rate, the suggestion of the mover of the Amendment is one well worthy of consideration, and one which it should be one of our objects to carry out, or at least to put to the test.

Now take the Army for defence at home. What sort of defence are we likely to want? What sort of attack are we likely to have to meet? The hon. Member for Chester pressed this home in his speech. We should like to know how much the command of the sea really guarantees to us in regard to home defence. If it is a mere question of meeting a temporary raid by a comparatively small number of men landed suddenly by surprise, then I am convinced that a citizen Army, such as the hon. Member opposite has advocated, would be amply sufficient to meet them. Anyone who has read the Army Memorandum and the Navy Memorandum will see that the question has not been thought out by the two Departments together. The two Departments take different views. But it is the duty of the Government to form and to carry out a policy, not to present the conflicting views of the Army and the Navy. Their policy should make one or the other view prevail. If it be the case that the command of the sea guarantees us from anything but a raid, then I think the case of the hon. Member has been amply made out, and we can rely upon a citizen Army for home defence. If the citizen Army is given to understand that that duty is laid upon them, they will be stimulated with a spirit of patriotism which would do more than anything else to make the Militia and Volunteer forces efficient.

Our Militia and Volunteer forces in this country have never yet had a chance, they have never been given to understand that a definite duty was laid upon them; they have always been taught to regard themselves as auxiliaries to be used they did not quite know how, to be used as supernumeraries, and as possibly not to be required at all. But, if it is once understood that they were clearly separated from the Regular Army abroad, that they constituted a citizen Army for defence at home, then I am confident that our Volunteer and Militia forces will develop into a force upon which the country could rely for any purposes of home defence. The right hon. Gentleman claims that his scheme serves a good purpose by bringing the officers commanding Army Corps closely into touch with the auxiliary forces; but that could be done without maintaining a large Regular Army. You might have a staff from your Regular Army for the purpose of being in contact with and for the training of the auxiliary force. You might have a staff to whom this duty should be specially allotted. And I believe if that were done, and if we had a clear separation between our Regular Army as such, and that were kept small, compact, but efficient, with a comparatively large staff available for the training of the auxiliary force at home—if that had been done we should have come through the last war crisis in South Africa much better than we did. The right hon. Gentleman has dwelt on the feelings that were aroused during the crisis of the war; he appealed to us to go back to what we felt and said at that time, always using that in support of his present Army scheme. Well, Sir, the crisis was severe enough, and none of us as long as we live will be likely to forget what we felt. The crisis was acute, but how did that crisis arise? The crisis arose, not because our Regular Army was not large enough, but because there were not enough troops on the spot at the time. I venture to say that if our Regular Army had been twice the size it was we should still have gone through the same crisis. The troops were not there, and no more would have been there. What was the crisis? In the first place we suddenly became alive to the fact that there was nothing to prevent the Boer Army from going straight to Cape Town. The next stage of the crisis was the investment of Ladysmith. What was the cause of that? We had troops enough to put our Colony into a state of defence. It was not the want of troops, but the fact that our troops were not on the spot. It was not the want of Army Corps. If we had had these six Army Corps all complete we should still have had no more men there at the time. We ought to have had more men on the spot, more preparation, more knowledge of the risk and danger we ran; then we should have been in a position to defend ourselves, and we could have taken aggressive action at leisure afterwards. We wanted men to volunteer who could shoot and ride; and so long as we had plenty of men of that kind we could have taken the war at our own time and have carried it through just as successfully as we have now done.

But the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman is going to reduce the number of men at home. The Volunteers have already been discouraged, and the number of men trained to shoot and ride is being actually reduced. What we want is a clear view of the possibilities abroad, for which a Regular Army may be needed. We know what was the position in South Africa; and I maintain that with a small Regular Army, but a larger and better trained citizen Army at home, we should have been in a better position to meet the difficulties there. In other parts of the world what questions are likely to arise requiring a large army for aggressive action? I put the American question aside; we have heard enough of the Monroe Doctrine lately to know what is the settled policy of the United States. The possibility of a great land war on that continent is for us unthinkable. Whatever our Army and Navy policy may be, we may leave the United States out of consideration. It would be out of our power to enter into rivalry with the United States on the American continent, and it is outside our desire. Then comes the question of Asia. I agree entirely with the hon. Member opposite as to the Indian frontier. I believe it would be an infinitely more difficult task for Russia to place 200,000 men on the Indian frontier than it was for us to place 200,000 men in South Africa; and even if they were placed there, they would have to get through the frontier. If that be so, then I do not see where, in Asia, we could have need of a large Regular Army for aggressive action on land. As for Europe, if ever this country should, unfortunately, become embroiled in European complications, it is surely upon the Navy we should rely. If any Government were to be so foolish as to allow us to be drawn into a land conflict of any extent, they would be pursuing a policy the most dangerous possible. If that be so, and I think there is little question about it, it is to the Navy that we must look in any great conquest with the great Powers of the world.

The right hon. Gentleman opposite, in the course of his speech, almost pleaded that it was rather surprising—that it was rather hard lines—that his scheme, which was assented to by the House of Commons less than two years ago, should now be subjected to so much criticism. But why is it so? I quite admit that, when he produced his scheme originally, he had far less difficulty with it than he has now. Why is it? I think it is partly because Parliament feels that it was rushed into this scheme. It is true that from this side of the House, and from this Bench, a Motion very similar to that which has now been moved from the other side, was proposed to the House at that time. Perhaps the Opposition was too hasty in opposing the scheme. The right hon. Gentleman is entitled to say that if the House had not time to think out his scheme, neither had it time to think out the opposition to the scheme. But suppose the Opposition, instead of moving a direct negative, had declined to commit itself to such a scheme without more consideration, would that have been more acceptable to the House? It would have been regarded merely as a dilatory Amendment, brought forward for Party purposes. We should have been told that the Government policy held the field, that we had none of our own, and so forth. I fully admit that since that time the Opposition which originated on this side of the House has been given more definiteness and boldness by the criticisms from the other side. The articles in *The Times*, to which I have alluded, and the speeches of hon. Members to-night, have gone in definiteness and scope beyond anything the Opposition had to say two years ago. The country has had time to consider this scheme at leisure. The House to-day is expressing, not a mere hasty prejudice, or some vague apprehension, but the result of its reflection, and it is precisely because two years ago the House had not had time to consider the scheme that to-day the right hon. Gentleman meets with an opposition more settled and determined than anything which arose originally. There is really no prejudice at the root of this opposition. In individual minds there may be prejudice against the War Office, but I am convinced that no one could have listened to the speeches with which generally their Amendment has been supported, and believed that mere petty prejudice against the War Office, or mere personal offence, was at the bottom of it. The cause of the feeling behind this Amendment, and the reason it is receiving an attention to-day which it would not have received two years ago, or even a year ago, is that the country and the House of Commons are becoming seriously alarmed with regard to the national expenditure. A great anxiety about national expenditure, a great anxiety for the future, is the force behind the present Amendment. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean gave some striking figures to the House. He stated that the land defence of the Empire, putting it at its lowest figure, now amounted to £81,500,000, against a Navy expenditure of £31,000,000.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: £31,000,000 on the Navy, and £50,500,000 on the Army.

SIR EDWARD GREY: That is £81,500,000 for both, £50,500,000 against £31,000,000. That is a perfectly fair comparison, because the Navy expenditure is the total of our Imperial expenditure, and if in this matter appeals are being made to the whole Empire to share in bearing its burden, against that it is fair to put the whole of the Army expenditure. The Navy expenditure we know, has not yet reached its sum. Everybody who has studied the Navy Estimates recently, and what is going on in the world, must be prepared for the possibility, at any rate, if not the probability, of a further increase in Navy expenditure. If we are to expend so much upon our Army that we are unable to deal freely with our Naval expenditure, then the Army is becoming a public danger. We have other expenses at home that we must meet. Many of us have fresh demands in regard to education, some, I believe, with regard to old age pensions, and many other matters. We may not all have set our hands to promises in these matters, but, at any rate, they are matters that we deem to be desirable, and some of them are pressing matters which no Government can resist permanently. Therefore there is the certainty that our home expenditure, not on military matters at all, but on matters connected with education and so forth, must be further increased. If that be so, unless there is some control exercised, unless there is some settled policy controlling our expenditure, you are getting near the day when the people of this country will say that the obligations of Empire are too great. If we are to deal with these matters as statesmen, it is necessary that we should consider what is really essential to the preservation of the Empire, and I think the right hon. Gentleman is launching us on a scheme which is not essential, and which is not suited to its purpose. It may be that in these comparatively good times, and for the present, the Government will succeed very well in meeting the expenditure they have in prospect. But it is the growing expenditure of the future that we have to look to. If in the future the day does come when this or any Government has to retrench its expenditure on the Navy, or on home matters, then certainly it will have brought the Empire within measurable distance of danger. If to-day the Imperial spirit of the country is such that it is prepared to meet all the obligations of Empire, we have to remember that the obligations now being laid on the country are getting exceedingly large, that they are bound to grow in the future, and that the duty does rest upon every one of us—when we see brought before the House a large scheme of this kind, entailing, as we consider, wasteful expenditure—to do everything in our power to prevent the country being saddled with something which we believe is not required, and which, because wasteful, will be dangerous.

SIR CHARLES WELBY (Nottinghamshire, Newark) said that in considering the Amendment it was necessary to bear in mind that it contained two separate and distinct propositions. When a person was about to buy an article there were two questions which, consciously or unconsciously, he asked himself—first, whether the article was suited to its purpose, and, secondly, whether it was a good article in itself and worth the money demanded for it. In the present instance, the article was the Army, and the Amendment declared it to be not only not suited to our purposes, but also not worth the price that was being paid. With the first of those propositions he had considerable sympathy, but to the second he unhesitatingly gave a negative answer. He objected to the Amendment, not only because it conveyed a practical censure on all the Government had done in regard to Army matters during recent years, but also because its declaration could not be sustained by the facts of the case. The increased expenditure, whether wise or unwise, was the result, not of a sudden new departure, but of the deliberate policy of strengthening and expanding the Army which the present Government had been steadily pursuing for the last seven years, and, for his part, granted that policy was a sound one, he believed the money had been well spent, and had resulted in a large increase of strength. A considerable proportion of the expenditure would have had to be incurred under any conceivable organisation, but it might be well to remind the House of some of the chief items of increased expenditure.

In the first place, a large increase had taken place in the batteries of artillery, over seventy batteries having been added during the last few years. That, at any rate, was an item of expenditure which the House must realise had been much called for both by the nation and by Parliament, and for which the Government could hardly be blamed. Then there had been a very large increase in the infantry, a large portion of which had been in connection with the battalions on the home establishment, the weakness of which had, more than anything else connected with the Army, been the subject of criticism and condemnation in the House. Then there was the increased pay, the full effect of which it was as yet too soon to gauge, but no one could have listened to the statement of the Secretary of State without feeling that there was good reason to believe that it would produce the effects which were hoped from it, and result in not only a larger quantity but also a better quality of recruits being attracted to the Colours. Moreover, the weakness of the cavalry and artillery in the matter of horses had been the subject of much criticism in the past, and one of the items of increased expenditure was the addition of 11,000 horses to the strength. Then a very expensive force of Yeomanry had been created, and various minor services, such as the Army Service Corps, the Army Medical Corps, and all those minor branches without which an Army could not take the field—which in the past had been more or less starved—had been brought up to the standard shown by war experience to be necessary. The protection of coaling stations and the replacing of obsolete arms had been steadily going on, and last, but not least, for some years past there had been a steady accumulation of war stores and munitions of all kinds.

That was a feature of expenditure of which very little result appeared on the surface, but it was a most vital part of Army organisation. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean had strongly deprecated any cutting down with regard to horses, guns, or stores. That, if his views were accepted, certainly removed from the field a very large class in which economies could possibly be made. The increase of Army expenditure within the last few years by 50 per cent. was unquestionably a very serious increase. He was bound to say, with such knowledge of the state of things now as compared with the state of things some years ago, that he was entirely convinced that our Regular Army was quite as strong as it was. On the question whether our Army, in the words of the Amendment, "is unsuited to the needs of the Empire," the hon. Member said that unquestionably raised a very serious, difficult, and complicated problem. The problem was further complicated by the fact that the expression used in the Amendment was extremely vague and capable of many different interpretations. It appeared, from what had been said in the course of the debate, some people seemed to think that the organisation of the land forces was the beginning and the end of what was called the Army Corps Scheme. He would remind the House that, whether that scheme was good or bad, whether suited to our needs or not, at all events it was responsible for a very small part of the expenditure they had now under consideration. After all, the main organisation was for administrative purposes to divide the country into six large military districts, instead of, as formerly was the case, sixteen small districts. He was a member of the Committee which sat a year or two ago on War Office Organisation, and that Committee were unanimous in holding that it was absolutely essential as a preliminary to any satisfactory scheme of decentralisation that the country should be mapped out in large districts instead of the small ones into which it was divided at that time.

They had heard many jokes or sneers with regard to those Army Corps, or some of them, not being visible to the naked eye. It was not to be expected at this season that they should be visible to the naked eye, and he could only say that if the last three were visible he would join the crusade headed by some of his hon. friends below the Gangway against the excessive expenditure on the Army. The Army Corps Scheme must be put on one side of the argument as being, for good or evil, not a very large factor in the question of our military expenditure. There remained the question—What was it that was chiefly exercising the public mind at the present moment with regard to Army organisation? He thought the problem which was exercising their minds was whether it was necessary to maintain a large number of Regular troops in this country, and whether it was possible to organise the Imperial forces which must be maintained in such a way as to make it possible to reduce that number. He was one of those who had always felt very great doubts as to the necessity of maintaining a large Regular force in this country. He believed that everything that had taken place in the late war had gone rather to strengthen than to weaken that view in his mind, but unquestionably there were certain difficulties in the way of changing that policy which could not be ignored. It was impossible to forget that in 1890, when practically the whole of our Regular force had been sent out of the country, there was a considerable feeling of uneasiness in the public mind. It may or may not have been well founded. Under similar circumstances that feeling might exist again, and, whether right or wrong, it was a feeling which no Government having the responsibility for the forces of the country could neglect or ignore. Another consideration which could not be forgotten was that during all the time he was connected with the War Office—he did not know what the case might be at the present moment—the military authorities always stated clearly and categorically that they would not

be responsible for the safety of this country in time of war with a great Power unless we had Regulars here to defend us. That never commended itself to him, but at the same time he had profound respect for those who held that view. Among other reasons why he hailed the reconstitution of the Committee of Defence on more regular lines was the fact that the military authorities would in future have to convince, not only the Secretary of State, but their naval colleagues, and, above all, the Prime Minister, of the necessity of keeping so many regular troops in this country. But, even supposing it was agreed that it was unnecessary to do so, there was the question whether it was possible to maintain the Army we were obliged to maintain for Imperial purposes without keeping a large number of troops in this country to support them. We were obliged in normal times to keep 120,000 men in India and other foreign stations, and so long as these men were organised on the short-service system it was absolutely necessary that there should be a force of something like, at all events, 60,000 at home, on a footing to support that force. As long as we kept our Army on the present footing we must have a Reserve at home. If we had a long foreign service Army we could do with a very small number of recruits, and in that way we might dispense very largely with our force at home. That would mean that we would sacrifice the Reserve and have no means of expanding the Army in time of war. That would be going back to the system which had broken down in the time of the Crimean War. In other words, it would be a course not of reform but of reaction, and it would be an alternative which he for one would refuse to have anything whatever to do with. An alternative which had been referred to was to keep a considerable part of the Army in South Africa on a home footing. While the suggestion had considerable attractions for him, he pitied the Government who, in a case of fresh disturbance in that country, might have to come to the House and say that the force in South Africa was on such a footing that it could not take the field without the addition of its Reserves, for the Reserves would be 6,000 miles away from South Africa. That seemed to him one of the many difficulties in placing the Army on a home footing in that part of the world. He had not mentioned these difficulties for the sake of condemning any of the suggestions which had been put forward. Some of them, at all events, seemed to him to be well worthy of consideration. He earnestly hoped that they would receive the fullest possible consideration at the hands of the experts, and by experts he did not mean military experts alone. He meant that combination of military, naval, and political experts who were to form the newly-constituted Committee of Defence. Provided that the functions of the Committee were confined to those of a strictly advisory body, that their proceedings were confidential and were not allowed to conflict with the responsibility of the Cabinet, he looked forward with great hope to the results of their deliberations, particularly if they approached those problems with open minds. He would be very pleased if as the result of their deliberations they should see their way to reduce the heavy expenditure now incurred in regard to the Army without sacrificing or evading any of those Imperial responsibilities of which we could not divest ourselves even if we would.

*MR. GUEST (Plymouth) said the Secretary of State for War made an admirable speech, but he thought the House must have felt that he had a somewhat uphill task to perform. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had thought it necessary to draw attention to the fact that an Amendment of this kind, if passed, might lead to his downfall. He was sure that no one on that side of the House who felt obliged to support the Amendment wished for such a result. They all recognised the honesty, the industry, and the versatility of the Secretary of State; and that it would be a great loss to the Party, not to say to the country, if he felt himself involved in the fate of his Army Scheme. He hoped that in any condemnation of that policy the Secretary of State would not think that any reflection was cast on the great services he had rendered to the State in the past. The right hon. Gentleman opened his speech by a rather unsuccessful attempt to detect divergencies of opinion in the three speakers who preceded him. There might be slight differences of opinion in matters of detail, but he thought an impartial listener would have detected a remarkable consensus of opinion in the three speakers. In the words of the Amendment, the scheme itself "is unsuited to the needs of the Empire." The right hon. Gentleman had quoted a great number of figures as to the success of recruiting during the past year. He had informed the House that the recruits raised in 1902 were no less than 51,000. He thought it was unfortunate that the House was not at the present moment in possession of the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting for 1902, for without it it was difficult to deal with figures like these which were thrown at the House at a moment's notice. He would call the attention of the House to the remarkable fact that in the report on recruiting for 1901 it was stated that the percentage of rejections of the recruits who presented themselves, which in 1897 was thirty-eight, had fallen last year to twenty-nine. He should very much like to know whether that tendency for a less exacting standard of efficiency had been continued in 1902. If it had been continued the standard of efficiency was far less than in 1897, which they might regard as a normal year.

There was another remarkable thing in the statement. The number of soldiers with the service of under one year or two years, who were never any value at all, increased from 997 in 1897 to no less than 3,825 in 1901. Then again, the percentage of waste from desertion was very much on the increase. In 1897 it was 5·97 per cent., whereas last year it was 10·6 per cent. The House would be glad to know whether those very bad tendencies, which affected very materially the calculations of his right hon. friend, were to be found in the Report which would be issued in the course of a few days. There was another consideration which he thought the Secretary of State for War had overlooked in his calculations. His right hon. friend required 50,000 troops per annum to complete his Six Army Corps Scheme. Had he taken into consideration the general waste on account of the causes which he had mentioned? For instance, the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment said that the Inspector General of Recruiting had declared that nearly 50 per cent. of the recruits were pure waste, "trash" he thought was the word used. His right hon. friend himself admitted that it was 47 per cent., and what the House wanted to know was what was the net gain in recruits per annum, and on what number could they really count as effective. They did not want a gross or paper calculation, which was easy to make and which was of so little value. Then the Secretary of State for War in his speech said the Army Corps scheme had not been responsible for the increase in the cost, and he further stated that of the 54,000 men who had been raised since 1897, only 5,000 were attributable to his own scheme. He would refer his right hon. friend to the speech he delivered on the 8th of March, 1901, in introducing the Army Corps Scheme. In that speech he distinctly stated that no less than 11,500 Regulars would be added to the Army Estimates by his scheme. That appeared to him to show a rather serious discrepancy as compared with his right hon. friend's statement that afternoon.

*MR. BRODRICK said that three Line battalions were not required to be raised. He was correct in saying that only 5,000 men were added to the Army by the scheme.

*MR. GUEST said that he then understood that the 11,500 men did not in fact represent what had occurred, and that the prediction of his right hon. friend had not been accomplished, because he intended to add 11,500 men to the Estimates, and had in fact only added 5,000 men. When his right hon. friend claimed that no additional expense had been cast upon the country in pursuit of his Army Corps Scheme, he would again refer him to his speech of the 8th March, 1901, in which he said, with an expenditure of a little under £2,000,000 he would accomplish all that he now claimed to have accomplished. His right hon. friend could not have it both ways. Either the recruiting scheme did not come up to his expectations, or else the recruits cost more money. It was quite clear if the recruits were there they would cost more money; and if they were not there his right hon. friend's scheme had failed. He was not concerned so much with the speech of his right hon. friend, because it was delivered under a considerable amount of adverse criticism; but his right hon. friend exhibited a very different tone to what he did two years ago. He was more concerned with trying to discover what was the real feeling of the Secretary of State for War as to the military necessities of the country, and as to how, and at what cost, those necessities should be met. What was the idea of the Secretary of State for War? He asked the question, because if there was anything in the Amendment at all, it was a contention that the conception of the Secretary of State for War revealed a complete misapprehension of the military needs of the Empire, and the resources with which they might be met.

The primary notion of the Secretary of State for War was that it was absolutely necessary for this country to have a large Army. In a speech he made to the Colonial Premiers he boasted that he had at his disposal no less than 250,000 men, and he boldly emphasised the fact that the necessities of the Empire entailed the service of at least a quarter of million of men. But his right hon. friend was not content with that. Last session he was accused of trying to introduce a Bill which would destroy the Yeomanry forces of the country in order that he might add to his Regular forces in cases of emergency. In that speech also he emphasised the fact that it was necessary for this country in times of emergency to have a call on further troops, they being, of course, colonial troops, and he boldly asserted that he did not mean to accommodate his organisation to the existing resources of the country. At what cost was that large Army to be created and carried on? In the first place, it was to be carried on at the expense of that immunity from compulsory military service which the country enjoyed from time immemorial. The Secretary of State for War more than once declared that nothing would deter him from proposing compulsory military service except the consideration that he had not exhausted all possible means of supply. In spite of the very confident and sanguine statements of his right hon. friend that afternoon, he could not help thinking that the House would feel that the Secretary of State for War was exhausting if he had not already exhausted, all the available means of obtaining the necessary recruits; and that he would have to consider himself very pusillanimous if he did not make other proposals.

So important was a large Army in the view of his right hon. friend that financial considerations did not weigh with him at all. He boasted that financial considerations were the business of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that in 1900–1 no less than £9,000,000 were added to the Army Estimates. But there was another consideration which was much more remarkable, and that was the subordinate position to which his right hon. friend relegated the Navy. His right hon. friend thought the Army was a much more important asset than the Navy. It was true that he paid lip service to the Navy, and said that it was obvious that it was the country's first line of defence; but in the next sentence he made a proposal which was the most remarkable and startling made in the House of Commons within the memory of any hon. Member. He calmly proposed to take no less than 5,000 sea-going men from the *personnel* of the Fleet, which was none too large, and lock them up in coaling stations all over the world, in order to release for the purposes of his Army Corps Scheme five battalions of infantry. That fact alone showed that his right hon. friend regarded the Navy as a secondary, because a very doubtful, asset, as it might easily be defeated. He was constantly referring to the fact that the Navy might lose command of the sea, and then he said it would be necessary for his Army Corps to defend England from invasion. His right hon. friend's idea was that the Navy was by no means invincible. That was not his view.

*MR. BRODRICK said he did not wish to interrupt the hon. Member, but he should not be taken as assenting to any of the hon. Member's propositions.

*MR. GUEST said that with regard to the interruption, perhaps it would interest the House if he were to quote again from the speech delivered by the Secretary of State for War at the Colonial Conference. He said that large as the figures might sound, they were certainly not deemed too large by military officers in view of the possibility of the country at any time losing command of the sea, and he reminded the Conference that what Great Britain did off her own bat was not limited to her power to send 120,000 men to any threatened position in case of emergency. But how would the Secretary of State for War be able to send 120,000 men to any threatened position if the Navy had lost command of the sea? That view of the right hon. Gentleman was a fundamental misconception of their strategic position. How was it possible for his right hon. friend to reconcile the defeat of the Navy with the safety of England. He admitted that against the world in arms three Army Corps were certainly not too many; the only question was whether they were not too few. He also admitted, of course, that 100,000 men were better than 50,000 men, other things being equal; but then other things were not equal. The expense of a large Army was not only double the expense of a small Army, but was more than double. The fact was that, under Providence, and with good diplomacy, there was no reason why they should contemplate having the whole of the civilised world banded against them. They had only to take into consideration the normal probable emergencies with which they might be brought face to face, and the normal risks which they might consider possible with a settled and consecutive policy. Now that the South African problem was solved, that country no longer presented the military danger it did three years ago.

Then his right hon. friend referred to India, but the balance of opinion was that the invasion of India was a matter of such great difficulty that it was impossible to conceive its being accomplished under at least two years. He was, perhaps, the only Member of the House who had had the advantage of travelling in Russian Central Asia, and who saw the Russian side of the problem. The only railway which connected Russian Central Asia with the main body of the Russian Empire was a railway running parallel to the frontier, and of hardly any value at all. When he travelled over it there was scarcely any rolling stock on it, it was laid down on foundations so uncertain that the train could only travel five or six miles an hour. The difficulty of collecting great masses of men and material could not be overcome in a short time, quite apart altogether from the difficulties of invasion. When he was in India twelve years ago he made the acquaintance of a very distinguished General, and his view was that there were in India as many white troops as could be put on the frontier, and that all that would be required would be volunteers to garrison the country behind and to maintain British prestige in India itself. If that was the case he could not see the justification for three Army Corps. With reference to Colonial Defence, there was only one colony, namely, Canada, which could be attacked from the land. The other Colonies could only be attacked by over-sea expeditions, and as long as they retained command of the sea that would be impossible. What was constantly in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman was the idea of the British Army being pitted against European troops. It could not be his right hon. friend's idea that British troops were to be set in battle array against a continental Army; and he was, therefore, driven to the conclusion that when his right hon. friend talked of European entanglements he contemplated England playing such a part in European politics as she did at the beginning of the last century. Really, it was rather strange that his right hon. friend should not have appreciated how the proportion of things had changed since then. It was idle to imagine that with three Army Corps, the country could play any such part in the European game as she did 100 years ago.

Where he and his hon. friends joined issue with the Secretary of State for War was, not that his scheme was a comparative failure, but because it was bad in itself and not suited to the needs of the country. Further his right hon. friend had involved the country in an enormous expenditure, which no one who cared at all for thrift or economy, or had any conception of the importance of keeping within their resources, could view without the gravest apprehension. It was quite unnecessary for him to draw attention to the enormous increase in national expenditure during the last ten or fifteen years; but he desired to draw the attention of the House to the fatal equality of the expenditure on the Army and the Navy. In 1900 the proportion spent on the Army was only 43 per cent.; in 1901 it was 45 per cent., and in 1902 it was 48 per cent.; and that excluded money spent on military works. Their position was that the scheme of the Secretary of State for War was quite unsuited to the need of the country, that it had entailed the expenditure of vast sums of money, and that they had not seen the end of the expenditure. The Amendment was not by any means a hostile attack on his right hon. friend, or on the Government, but was a protest and a remonstrance against the policy inaugurated by his right hon. friend two years ago, and which he sincerely hoped he would abandon.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): I beg to move the adjournment of the Debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Churchill.*)

Put and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed Tomorrow.

PARISHES (UNITED, DIVIDED, ETC.).

Address for "Return of parishes divided and districts assigned to churches by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, under the provisions of the Church Building Acts and The Parish of Manchester Division Act, 1850."

"Of all districts and new parishes constituted by the same Commissioners under the New Parishes Acts."

"Of all districts or parishes assigned or constituted by the same Commissioners under The St. Leonard and St. Mary Magdalen Church Districts Act, 1868, or any other local Act."

"Of all the benefices, parishes, or parts of parishes united by Order in Council, and of all benefices or parishes disunited by Order in Council.

"Of all chapelries, hamlets, and other parts of parishes severed from their mother parishes, and of extra-parochial places, constituted separate benefices by Order of the Council."

"And of all chapelries, hamlets, or other parts of parishes severed from their mother parishes, and of extra-parochial places not constituted separate benefices but united to other parishes by Order of the Council."

"And, of curacies and chapelries which have been erected into perpetual curacies through the action of the governors of the bounty of Queen Anne, showing the full name of the chapel, and of the mother parish (if any), the county and diocese, and the date of first augmentation by the governors, and the statutes or statute under which such augmentation was made (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 302, of Session 1897)."—(*Mr. Talbot.*)

CHURCHES (CITY OF LONDON).

Address for "return of the number of churches in the city of London pulled down or condemned during the period from the 2nd day of August, 1894, to the 31st day of December, 1902, stating the gross sum realised by the sale of the site, the items of expenses such as solicitors' and auctioneers' charges, and the cost of removal of the dead buried within the church, and the net sum produced; what new churches have been built out of the proceeds in lieu of the churches pulled down, their situation, and cost; and what has been done with the parochial endowments (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 236, of Session 1895)."—(*Mr. Talbot.*)

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.

Bill to amend The Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876, ordered to be brought in by Sir Fredrick Banbury, Colonel Lockwood, and Mr. MacNeill.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS BILL.

"To amend The Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 50.]

Adjourned at two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 24th February, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Birmingham District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Bournemouth Gas and Water Bill [H.L.]; British Gas Light Company (Norwich) Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Chatham and District Light Railways Bill [H.L.]; Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Derby Gas Bill [H.L.]; Didcot, Newbury, and Southampton Railway Bill [H.L.]; Dudley, Stourbridge, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Exeter Railway Bill [H.L.]; Faversham Gas Bill [H.L.]; Harrow and Stanmore Gas Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Tramways (Extensions) Bill [H.L.]; Hexham Gas Bill [H.L.]; Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Indiarubber, Guttapercha, and Telegraph Works Company Bill [H.L.]; Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Lima Railways Bill [H.L.]; London and North-Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill]H.L.]; Milford Docks Bill [H.L.]; Nantwich Gas Bill [H.L.]; North's Navigation Collieries Bill [H.L.]; Pelican and British Empire Life Office Bill [H.L.]; Plymouth and Stonehouse Gas Bill [H.L.]; Poole and District Electric Traction Bill [H.L.]; Port Talbot Railway and Docks Bill [H.L.]; Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage Bill [H.L.]; Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation Bill [H.L.]; South-Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; South Wales Mineral Railway Bill [H.L.]; South-Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway Bill [H.L.]; Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Bill [H.L.]; Taff Vale Railway Bill [H.L.]; Wellington (Salop) Gas Bill [H.L.]; Western Trust Bill [H.L.]; Wirral Railway Bill [H.L.]. Presented; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

All Saints, Poplar (Rate Abolition) Bill [H.L.]; Antrim, Down, Armagh, and Belfast Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Aston Manor Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Bangor Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Belfast Water Bill [H.L.]; Birmingham Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Bradford Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Brighton Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bury and District Joint Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity Bill [H.L.]; Exeter Corporation Bill [H.L]; Frinton-on-Sea Sea Defences Bill [H.L.]; Harrogate Water Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Harbour Bill [H.L.]; King's College, London, Bill [H.L.]; London County Asylums (Receiving Houses) Bill [H.L.]; Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Mid Yorkshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Nantwich Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.]; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Old Bridewell Burying Ground Bill [H.L.]; Oldham Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Pontypridd Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Rickmansworth Gas Bill [H.L.]; Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.]; St. Philip's Chapel (Regent Street) Bill [H.L.]; Salford Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Scunthorpe Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Shepshed Urban District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Shropshire, Worcestershire, and East Denbighshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Somerset and District Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Southampton Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Sutton Coldfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Torquay Corporation Water Bill [H.L.]; West Bromwich Corporation Bill [H.L]; Willesden Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Worthing Corporation (Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Presented, and read 1ª.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 2936. Italy (Trade of Naples for the year 1902).

No. 2937. Western Pacific (Trade of Samoa for the year 1902).

No. 2938. Trade of Brazil (for the first half of the year 1902).

No. 2939. France (Agriculture of Consular District of Havre for the year 1902).

CENSUS, 1901 (ISLANDS IN THE BRITISH SEAS).

Isle of Man, Jersey, Guernsey, and adjacent Islands.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

CANCER.

Special Report on Cancer in Ireland, being a supplement to the Thirty-eighth Annual Report of the Registrar General, Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILL.

MARINE INSURANCE BILL [H.L.]

A Bill for codifying the law relating to marine insurance was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No 5.)

LIGHT LOAD LINE.

Moved that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire and report whether, and if so to what extent, British ships are sent to sea in an unseaworthy condition by reason of their being insufficiently or improperly ballasted, whether any amendment or amplification of the present law is desirable in connection therewith; if so, to what extent any such alteration of the law could be made equally applicable to foreign vessels—(*The Lord Wolverton*)—agreed to; and ordered accordingly.

The Lords following were named of the Committee.

E. Spencer.	L. Wolverton.
V. Ridley.	L. Brassey.
L. Muskerry.	L. Inverclyde.

The Committee to meet on Thursday next at Twelve o'clock and to appoint their own Chairman.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 24th February, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

BAKER STREET AND WATERLOO RAILWAY (TRANSFER) BILL.

' To authorise the Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Company to acquire additional lands, and to transfer the undertaking and powers of that Company to the Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

BARNSLEY CORPORATION (WATER) BILL.

"To amend the provisions of The Barnsley Order, 1902; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

BATH CORPORATION WATER BILL.

"To empower the Corporation of Bath to construct additional waterworks; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

BECKENHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.

"To authorise the Urban District Council of Beckenham in the county of Kent to carry out street improvements; to construct and work tramways; and to make further provision in regard to the electricity undertaking of the Council; and for the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

BILLINGSHURST AND DISTRICT GAS BILL.

"To incorporate the Billingshurst and District Gas Company and to enable that Company to supply with gas the parishes of Billingshurst, Wisborough Green, and other places in the county of Sussex," read the first time; to be read a second time.

BLACKHEATH AND GREENWICH DISTRICT ELECTRIC LIGHT BILL.

"To confirm an agreement for the transfer to the Blackheath and Greenwich District Electric Light Company, Limited, of the undertaking of the Lewisham and District Electric Supply Company, Limited; and to confer further powers upon the Blackheath and Greenwich District Electric Light Company, Limited; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

BRIDGWATER GAS BILL.

"For continuing the Bridgwater Gas Light Company; for regulating and increasing the capital of the Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

BRISTOL, LONDON, AND SOUTHERN COUNTIES RAILWAY BILL.

"For incorporating the Bristol, London, and Southern Counties Railway Company, and to authorise them to make and maintain railways in the counties of Bristol, Gloucester, Somerset, Wilts, and Southampton; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

BROADSTAIRS GAS BILL.

"For conferring further powers on the Broadstairs Gas Company," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

BURGESS HILL AND ST. JOHN'S COMMON GAS BILL.

"For incorporating and conferring powers on the Burgess Hill and St. John's Common Gas Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

CASTLEBLANEY, KEADY, AND ARMAGH RAILWAY (EXTENSION OF TIME).

"To extend the time limited by The Kingscourt, Keady, and Armagh Railway Act, 1900 for the compulsory purchase of lands and for the construction of certain of the railways authorised by that Act; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

CENTRAL LONDON RAILWAY BILL.

"To empower the Central London Railway Company to construct new railways; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

CHARING CROSS, EUSTON, AND HAMPSTEAD RAILWAY BILL.

"To confer further powers upon the Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Company, to transfer to and vest in that company the powers of the Edgware and Hampstead Railway Company, to authorise agreements with and the lease of the undertaking to the Underground Electric Railways Company of London, Limited, to transfer to and vest in the Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Company the undertaking and powers of the Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

CHESHIRE LINES COMMITTEE BILL.

"To enable the Cheshire Lines Committee to make new railways, to run over the Liverpool Overhead Railway, to acquire additional lands; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

CITY AND NORTH-EAST SUBURBAN ELECTRIC RAILWAY BILL.

"For incorporating the City and North-East Suburban Electric Railway Company, and for empowering them to construct railways from the City of London to Tottenham and Chequers Green, Southgate, and to Walthamstow, Epping Forest, and Waltham Abbey; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

CITY AND SOUTH LONDON RAILWAY.

"For empowering the City and South London Railway Company to construct an extension of their underground railway to Euston in the County of London; and for transferring to that Company the powers of the City and Brixton Railway Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

CLAPHAM JUNCTION AND MARBLE ARCH RAILWAY (No.1) BILL.

"For incorporating the Clapham Junction and Marble Arch Railway Company; and for empowering them to construct a railway from the neighbourhood of Clapham Junction Railway Station to the Marble Arch in the County of London; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

COMMERCIAL GAS BILL.

"To make provision for the testing of gas supplied by the Commercial Gas Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

CORK HARBOUR BILL.

"To amend the Acts relating to the Cork Harbour Commissioners; to confer further powers on the Commissioners; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

COVENTRY AND ARLEY RAILWAY BILL.

"For making and maintaining Railways in the county of Warwick, to be called the Coventry and Arley Railway; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

COVENTRY ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS BILL.

"To authorise the Coventry Electric Tramways Company to construct additional tramways; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills."

CRYSTAL PALACE DISTRICT GAS BILL.

"To confer further powers on the Crystal Palace District Gas Company with respect to the purchase and holding of lands, and to alter the provisions of the Acts of the Company with respect to the illuminating power of gas supplied by them and the testing of gas; and to change the name of the Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

DUBLIN IMPROVEMENT (BULL ALLEY AREA) BILL.

"To amalgamate the Guinness Trust (Dublin) Fund with the Dublin Improvement (Bull Alley Area) Scheme; to vest the property of the Guinness (Dublin) Trustees in the trustees of the said scheme; to change the name of the last mentioned trustees; to confer further powers on them; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

DUBLIN, WICKLOW, AND WEXFORD RAILWAY BILL.

"To provide for the revision of the rent payable in respect of the lease of the undertaking of the Dublin and Kingstown Railway Company to the Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Company; to make other provision as to those two Companies; to enable the Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Company to make certain diversion railways and other works; to raise additional money; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

EAST ARDSLEY GAS BILL.

"For incorporating and conferring powers upon the East Ardsley Gas Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

EAST HAM IMPROVEMENT BILL.

"To confer further powers upon the Urban District Council for the district of East Ham, in the county of Essex," read the first time; to be read a second time.

EBBW VALE WATER AND IMPROVEMENT BILL.

"To authorise the Urban District Council of Ebbw Vale to construct additional waterworks and to provide additional cemeteries, and to make further provision with regard to the supply of electricity and for the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

ERITH TRAMWAYS AND IMPROVEMENT BILL.

"To authorise the Urban District Council of Erith in the County of Kent to construct and work tramways; to carry out street improvements; to transfer to the Council the powers within the district of the Commissioners of Sewers for the limits extending from Lombard's Wall to Gravesend Bridge; and to make further provision in regard to the supply of electricity; and for the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

FISHGUARD AND ROSSLARE RAILWAYS AND HARBOURS BILL.

"To confer further powers upon the Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Company; for the construction of a railway and other works and the acquisition of lands; and to make provision as to a bridge over the River Suir at Waterford; to empower the Great

Western and Great Southern and Western Railway Companies to guarantee interest on the capital of the Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

GAS LIGHT AND COKE COMPANY BILL.

"To enable the Gas Light and Coke Company to raise additional moneys, and to purchase, take, and hold lands; and for altering the standard price of gas and redeeming capital; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

GAS LIGHT AND COKE COMPANY'S ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To alter the standard price to be charged by the Gas Light and Coke Company for gas supplied; to alter the prescribed illuminating power and to make provisions with respect to the supply of burners; to make provisions with respect to a capital redemption fund; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

GATESHEAD CORPORATION BILL.

"To make better provision for the health, good government, and improvement of the county borough of Gateshead; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

GORLESTON AND SOUTHTOWN GAS BILL.

"For conferring further powers on the Gorleston and Southtown Gas Company," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY BILL.

"To authorise the construction of new railways and the acquisition of lands by the Great Central Railway Company in connection with their undertaking; the construction of new railways by the North Wales and Liverpool Railway Committee or the Company in connection with the undertaking of that Committee; the construction of a new railway by the Great Central and Midland Railway Companies in connection with their Shireoaks Railway; the diversion of footpaths by the Great Western and Great Central Railways' Joint Committee in connection with their undertaking; the establishment of a pension fund by the Great Central Company; the raising of further capital; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY (No. 1) BILL.

"For conferring further powers on the Great Eastern Railway Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY (No. 2) BILL.

"To authorise the Great Eastern Railway Company to widen their Cambridge and Norwich main line of railway over the River Wensum; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

GREAT NORTHERN AND CITY RAILWAY BILL.

"To amend The Great Northern and City Railway Act, 1902, and to authorise the Great Northern and City Railway Company to raise additional capital for the purposes of their undertaking," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

GREAT NORTHERN, PICCADILLY, AND BROMPTON RAILWAY (NEW LINES AND EXTENSIONS) BILL.

"To empower the Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Company to construct railways and works; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

GREAT NORTHERN, PICCADILLY, AND BROMPTON RAILWAY (VARIOUS POWERS) BILL.

"To confer further powers on the Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY BILL.

"To confer further powers upon the Great Northern Railway Company," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY BILL.

"To empower the Great Southern and Western Railway Company to construct certain new railways; to acquire additional lands; to enlarge and improve their station at Waterford; to confer further powers upon the Company; to enable them to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY BILL.

"For conferring further powers upon the Great Western Railway Company in respect of their own undertaking and upon that Company and the London and North Western Railway Company and the Midland Railway Company in respect of undertakings in which they are jointly interested, and upon the Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Company in respect of their undertaking; for amalgamating the Ely Valley Railway Company with the Great Western Railway Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY (PENSION FUND) BILL.

"To make further provision with respect to the Servants' Pension Fund of the Great Western Railway Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

GRINDLEFORD, BASLOW, AND BAKEWELL RAILWAY BILL.

"For making railways in the county of Derby from the Midland Railway (Dore and Chinley Branch) at Grindleford to the Midland Railway (Derby and Manchester Branch) at Bakewell; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

HAINAULT FOREST BILL.

"To authorise the acquisition of lands known as Lambourne Common, Chigwell Common, Fox Burrows Farm, Grange Hill Forest, and other lands in the county of Essex for the purposes of public open spaces," read the first time; to be read a second time.

HAMPTON COURT GAS BILL.

"To authorise the Hampton Court Gas Company to raise additional capital; to convert their existing capital; to enlarge their works; to amend their existing Acts; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

HIGHLAND AND INVERGARRY AND FORT AUGUSTUS RAILWAY COMPANIES (SUBSTITUTED) BILL.

"To confirm an agreement between the Highland Railway Company and the Invergarry and Fort Augustus Railway Company; to enable the Highland Railway Company to erect and maintain an hotel at Dornoch, to apply their capital thereto; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

HUMBER COMMERCIAL RAILWAY AND DOCK BILL.

"To empower the Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Company to construct a new dock with connecting railway and other works and entrance into the River Humber; to abandon the dock and work authorised by The Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Act, 1901; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

HYDE CORPORATION BILL.

"To make further and better provision with regard to the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the borough of Hyde; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

IPSWICH GAS BILL.

"To confer further powers upon the Ipswich Gas Light Company," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

KENT WATER BOARD BILL.

"For incorporating a Water Board, to consist of representatives of certain urban and rural district councils in the county of Kent, and for conferring upon such Board power to purchase certain portions of the undertakings of the companies of proprietors of the Kent waterworks and the Lambeth waterworks; and to supply water; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE AND LONDON AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAYS (STEAM VESSELS) BILL.

"To extend and enlarge the powers of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company and the London and North Western Railway Company as to Steam Vessels; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

LEIGH CORPORATION BILL.

"To make provision as to the water supply of the borough of Leigh and the urban district of Hindley; to enable the Corporation of Leigh to make new waterworks, tramways, and street improvements; and to make further provisions for the health, local government, and improvement of the said borough; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

LLANDRINDOD WELLS IMPROVEMENT BILL.

"To authorise the Urban District Council of Llandrindod Wells, in the county of Radnor, to purchase lands for the purposes of recreation grounds; to acquire certain springs; and to make further provision in regard to the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

LONDON BUILDING ACTS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

"To amend the Acts relating to buildings in London; to confer various powers on the London County Council; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (ELECTRIC SUPPLY) BILL.

"To make further provisions with respect to the purchase of electric undertakings by local authorities in the administrative county of London, and with respect to the supply of energy from stations of the London County Council; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS) BILL.

"To empower the London County Council to purchase lands; to extend the time for completion of certain works and acquisition of lands; to empower the Metropolitan Borough Councils of Camberwell and Kensington to execute works and purchase lands; to make provision with respect to premises used for receiving horses for slaughter and carcasses of dead horses, and the removal and disposal of dead horses; to alter the method of testing gas employed by the South Metropolitan Gas Company; to make provision with respect to the drainage of Upper Norwood; to confer powers upon Metropolitan Borough Councils with respect to street markets, the fitting of premises of consumers of electricity, and the provision and maintenance of public clocks; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

LONDON HYDRAULIC POWER BILL.

"To enlarge the powers of the London Hydraulic Power Company as to the raising of capital; the supply of water; and the acquisition of a new site for their pumping station at Westminster; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

LONDON, TILBURY, AND SOUTHEND RAILWAY BILL.

"To authorise the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Company to construct new railways and works; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

LONDON UNITED TRAMWAYS BILL.

"For conferring further powers on the London United Tramways (1901), Limited, for widening and altering roads and acquiring lands in the counties of Middlesex, Surrey, and London; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

MAIDSTONE GAS BILL.

"To authorise the Maidstone Gas Company to convert their existing capital; to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

MARKET DRAYTON GAS BILL.

"For incorporating and conferring powers on the Market Drayton Gas Company," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

MERTHYR TYDVIL URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.

"To empower the Urban District Council of Merthyr Tydvil to construct additional waterworks and a street improvement; and to make further and better provision for the good government, health, and improvement of the district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAY (WORKS) BILL.

"To empower the Metropolitan District Railway Company to construct railways and works; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

MIDDLESBROUGH CORPORATION BILL.

"To make further provision with respect to the health and good government of the county borough of Middlesbrough and the collection of rates within the said borough: and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

MIDLAND AND BELFAST AND NORTHERN COUNTIES RAILWAYS BILL.

"To provide for the vesting of the undertaking of the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway Company in the Midland Railway Company;" read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

MIDLAND GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY OF IRELAND BILL.

"To enable the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Company to construct a railway from Kingscourt to Castleblayney; to acquire additional lands; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

MIDLAND RAILWAY BILL.

"To confer additional powers upon the Midland Railway Company and upon the Norfolk and Suffolk Joint Railways Committee and upon the Midland and Great Northern Railways Joint Committee for the construction of works and the acquisition of lands; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

MULLINGAR, KELLS, AND DROGHEDA RAILWAY BILL.

"To incorporate the Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Company; and for making railways and other works in the counties of Westmeath, Meath, and Louth; and to confer subscription and other powers on certain existing Railway Companies and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

NANTYGLO AND BLAINA WATER BILL.

"To authorise the Urban District Council of Nantyglo and Blaina to construct waterworks; and to supply water within the district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

NEATH, PONTARDAWE, AND BRYNAMMAN RAILWAY BILL.

"To confer further powers upon the Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynamman Railway Company for the construction of railways; to authorise the Company to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," read the first time and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

NELSON CORPORATION BILL.

"To extend the time for the construction of certain waterworks authorised by the Nelson Local Board Act, 1888; for protecting the water supply from pollution; and to make better provision in regard to the supply of water; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE ELECTRIC SUPPLY BILL.

"To transfer the electricity undertaking of the Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Company to the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Company, Limited;

and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

NEW HUNSTANTON IMPROVEMENT BILL.

"To authorise the Urban District Council of New Hunstanton to acquire land for water and gas purposes; to construct an outfall sewer; and to make further provision in regard to the health, local government, improvement, and finance of the urban district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY BILL.

"To confer additional powers upon the North-Eastern Railway Company for the construction of new railways and other works and the acquisition of lands; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

NORTH MIDDLESEX GAS BILL.

"To extend the powers of the North Middlesex Gas Company," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

NORTH-WEST LONDON RAILWAY BILL.

"For empowering the North-West London Railway Company to extend their underground railway to Victoria; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PLYMOUTH CORPORATION BILL.

"To confer further powers upon the Corporation of Plymouth in regard to their tramway undertaking and the construction of street improvements; to transfer the Cottonian Museum to the Corporation; and to make further provision in regard to the borrowing of money by the Corporation and the repayment of their loans; and to the health, local government, and improvement of the borough; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

SCARBOROUGH GAS BILL.

"To authorise the Scarborough Gas Company to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

SEAFORTH AND SEFTON JUNCTION RAILWAY BILL.

"For making railways in the county of Lancaster; for connecting the Southport and Cheshire Lines Extension Railway with the Liverpool Overhead Railway; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time

SITTINGBOURNE DISTRICT GAS BILL.

"To confer further powers on the Sittingbourne District Gas Company," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

SOUTH SHIELDS CORPORATION BILL.

"To enable the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the county borough of South Shields to construct tramways in the borough; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

SOUTH SHIELDS, SUNDERLAND, AND DISTRICT TRAMWAYS BILL.

"To authorise the British Electric Traction Company, Limited, to construct tramways between South Shields and Sunderland and other places; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE JOINT RAILWAYS BILL.

"For enabling the North-Eastern, the Lancashire and Yorkshire, the Great Northern, the Midland, and the Great Central Railway Companies to construct or take over certain railways in South Yorkshire authorised by the Shireoaks, Laughton, and Maltby Railway Act, 1901, and the North-Eastern Railway Act, 1902; and to construct other railways and works; for constituting a Joint Committee; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

STROUD DISTRICT AND CHELTENHAM TRAMWAYS BILL.

"To incorporate the Stroud District and Cheltenham Tramways Company, and to empower that Company to make and maintain tramways in the county of Gloucester; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

SUTTON DISTRICT WATER BILL.

"To authorise the Sutton District Water Company to construct additional waterworks, acquire lands, and raise further moneys; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

THAMES CONSERVANCY BILL.

"To confer further money and other powers on the Conservators of the River Thames for the deepening, widening, and improvement of its bed and channels as far as the Royal Albert Docks; to amend in various respects the Thames Conservancy Act, 1894; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

THAMES STEAMBOAT TRUST BILL.

"To incorporate trustees for the maintenance of a service of steamboats on the River Thames; to transfer to them the undertaking of the Thames Steamboat Company (1897) Limited; to provide for the transfer to them of certain piers on the River Thames; and for the guarantee by the Corporation of the City of London, the London County Council, and the Conservators of the River Thames of interest on moneys to be borrowed by the trustees; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

ULSTER AND CONNAUGHT LIGHT RAILWAYS BILL.

"To authorise the construction of a railway from Maguiresbridge to Bawnboy Road, in the counties of Fermanagh and Cavan; and of certain railways at Arigna and Dromod, in the counties of Roscommon and Leitrim; and the working of such railways and the Clogher Valley and Cavan and Leitrim Railways and other railways in connection therewith as one railway; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

WALKER AND WALLSEND UNION GAS BILL.

"To empower the Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Company to enlarge and extend their existing gasworks at Walker; and to construct a short line of railway or siding into their said gasworks; to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

WATFORD AND EDGWARE RAILWAY BILL.

"For incorporating the Watford and Edgware Railway Company, and for empowering them to construct a railway from Watford to Edgware; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

WELLINGBOROUGH AND DISTRICT TRAMROADS BILL.

"To empower the British Electric Traction Company (Limited) to construct a new tramroad in the county of Northampton; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

WEST CUMBERLAND ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS BILL.

"To extend the periods for the commencement of the construction and for the completion of the tramways, tramroads, and other works, and for the taking of lands authorised by the West Cumberland Electric Tramways Act, 1901; to extend the area within which the West Cumberland Electric Tramways Company may supply electricity, and to confer on that Company further and additional powers with regard to such supply; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

WESTERN VALLEYS (MONMOUTHSHIRE) SEWERAGE BOARD BILL.

"To constitute and incorporate a Joint Board, consisting of representatives of the Urban District Councils of Abercarn, Abertillery, Ebbw Vale, Nantyglo, and Blaina and Risca, all in the county of Monmouth; and to authorise the Board to construct main trunk sewers and other works for the disposal of the sewage of such districts; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

WEST HAM CORPORATION BILL.

"To confer further powers upon the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the county borough of West Ham, and to make further provision for the good government of that borough; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

WEST SUSSEX WATER BILL.

"To incorporate the West Sussex Water Company, and to enable the Company to supply water within the parish of Pulborough and certain other parishes in the county of Sussex," read the first time; to be read a second time.

WINCHESTER WATER AND GAS BILL.

"For conferring further powers upon the Winchester Water and Gas Company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

WOLVERHAMPTON AND CANNOCK CHASE RAILWAY (EXTENSION OF TIME) BILL.

"To extend the time for the compulsory purchase of lands and for the construction and completion of the Wolverhampton and Cannock Chase Railway; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

WOOD GREEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.

"To enable the Urban District Council of Wood Green to acquire part of Wood Green Common for the purposes of a dust destructor; and to make further provision with regard to the electric light undertaking of the Council; and for the improvement, health, and local government of the district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

WOOLWICH BOROUGH COUNCIL BILL.

"To authorise the Mayor, Aldermen, and Councillors of the metropolitan borough of Woolwich to supply electrical energy in bulk to the Urban District Council of Foots Cray; to confer further powers upon the said Mayor, Aldermen, and Councillors; and to make further provision with respect to markets in the borough of Woolwich; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from St. Andrews and St. Leonards; Holm; Ruthven; Erskine; Galashiels; Barry; Bervie; and, Dumbarton; to lie upon the Table.

LAND TRANSFER ACT, 1897.

Petition from Middlesex, for inquiry into the compulsory system of registration; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Blackpool; Salford; and Stoke Newington; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 23rd February—*Mr. Austen Chamberlain*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 31.]

NAVY (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT).

Copy presented, of the Appropriation Account of the Navy for 1901–1902, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon, and upon the Store accounts of the Navy [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 32.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2936 to 2939 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION ACT, 1889.

Copy presented, of Minute sanctioning the Subjects to be taught under Clause 8 of the Act, for the County of Cardigan (Second Minute), dated 14th November, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION ACT, 1889.

Copy presented, of Minute sanctioning the subjects to be taught under Clause

8 of the Act, for the County of Rutland (Fifth Minute), dated 14th November, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION ACT, 1889.

Copy presented, of Minute sanctioning the Subjects to be taught under Clause 8 of the Act, for the County of Devon (Eighth Minute), dated 27th November, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CENSUS, 1901.

Copy presented, of Census, 1901 (Islands in the British Seas) (Isle of Man, Jersey, and Guernsey and adjacent Islands) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1902-3).

Estimate presented, of the further sums required to be voted for the Service of the year ending 31st March, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 33.]

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA (TAXATION OF NATIVES).

Address for "Return showing the rates of Taxation now paid by Natives in the several parts of British South Africa."—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

BREWERS' LICENCES.

Return ordered, "of accounts of the number of persons in each of the several collections of the United Kingdom licensed as brewers for sale, *i.e.* common brewers, victuallers, retailers of beer to be drunk on the premises, retailers of beer not to be drunk on the premises, and brewers of beer not for sale, particularising each class in each collection; and of the number of licences issued to victuallers and retailers of beer to be drunk on the premises and not to be drunk on the premises; and stating also the quantities of malt, unmalted corn, rice, etc., sugar, including its equivalent of syrups, etc., hops and hop substitutes, used by brewers of beer for sale, and of malt and sugar used by brewers not for sale, from the 1st day of October, 1901, to the 30th day of September, 1902."

"Of the amount of Licence Duty paid and Beer Duty charged from the 1st day of October, 1901, to the 30th day of September, 1902, distinguishing brewers for sale from other brewers."

"Of the number of brewers for sale (i.) who use malt and hops, or hop substitutes only, and (ii.) who use malt with substitutes for same and hops or hop substitutes paying for licences, from the 1st day of October, 1901, to the 30th day of September, 1902, separating them into classes, according to the number of barrels of beer charged with duty calculated at 1·055 degrees gravity, viz.: under 1,000 barrels; 1,000 and under 10,000; 10,000 and under 20,000; 20,000 and under 30,000; 30,000 and under 50,000; 50,000 and under 100,000; 100,000 and under 150,000; 150,000 and under 200,000; 200,000 and under 250,000; 250,000 and under 300,000; 300,000 and under 350,000; 350,000 and under 400,000; 400,000 and under 450,000; 450,000 and under 500,000; 500,000 and under 600,000; 600,000 and under 700,000; 700,000 and under 800,000; 800,000 and under 900,000; 900,000 and under 1,000,000; 1,000,000 and under 1,500,000; 1,500,000 and under 2,000,000; 2,000,000 barrels and over; showing separately, in each class, the quantities of malt, unmalted corn, rice, etc., sugar, including its equivalent of syrups, etc., hops and hop substitutes used; and stating also the number of bulk barrels of beer produced, and the amount of Licence Duty paid and Beer Duty charged in each class:"

"And, of the number of barrels of beer exported from the United Kingdom, and the declared value thereof, and where exported to, from the 1st day of October, 1901 to the 30th day of September, 1902, distinguishing England, Scotland, and Ireland (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 71, of Session 1902)."—(*Mr. Hayes Fisher.*)

PAUPERISM (ENGLAND AND WALES) (MONTHLY STATEMENTS).

Return ordered, "of Statements for each month of the year 1903 of the number of Paupers (except Lunatics in County and Borough Asylums, Registered Hospitals, and Licensed Houses, and Vagrants) in receipt of relief in England and Wales (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 121, of Session 1902)".—(*Mr. Grant Lawson.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Cotton Cloths Factories Acts—Home Office Prosecutions.

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state what number of employers were reported during the year 1902 by the Inspector under the Cotton Cloths Factories Act as having exceeded the nine volumes of carbonic acid (carbon dioxide) in every 10,000 volumes of air (Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, Clause 94, section 3); and whether he can state the number of prosecutions which have been instituted by the Home Department in consequence of these reports.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) There were sixty-three cases in 1902 in which the inspector reported that an employer had exceeded the standard referred to; but in many cases the excess was found only in one part of the shed, while in other parts the proportion of carbonic acid was found to be below the prescribed limit. No proceedings were instituted on these reports. I do not think the inspectors are called upon to prosecute unless a contravention of the Act in this matter is continued or repeated after notice from the inspector.

Licences Refused for Reasons other than Misconduct.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can give the numbers of licences refused for reasons other than misconduct during recent years.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) Returns of the renewals of licences refused in recent years have been published for the years 1890, 1891, 1895, and 1900. It appears from these that out of the total of 186 for the year 1890, 43 renewals were refused for the sole reason that they were not required and 37 for that reason combined with others, *e.g.*, misconduct. Of the refusals because not required, five were reversed on appeal. The corresponding figures for 1891 are: total refusals, 339; not required, 103; not required and other reasons, 53; reversals of not required, on appeal, 6. For 1895 the figures are 200, 30, 59, and 4, respectively. For 1900 the figures are 216, 77, 48, and 12.

Newton Abbot Post Office—Increased Salary for Staff.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE (Devonshire, Ashburton): To ask the Postmaster General whether, in view of the increase in the cost of living as well as the increase of postal and telegraphic business at Newton Abbot, he will make inquiries with the purpose of placing that town in the next class, and so increasing the possible maximum salary of the staff; and whether he will consider the advisability of raising the scales of pay in the Newton Abbot Post Office to those in existence at Barnstaple and Bridgwater.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The question of the wages proper to the postmen at Newton Abbot was examined by me so recently as November last, and I explained in my reply to the right hon. Gentleman in this House on the 21st † of that month that it was not considered that there are sufficient grounds for placing the postmen upon the next higher scale of wages. Their present scale is the same as that received by the postmen at Barnstaple.

Telegraphic Addresses of Dublin Bookmakers.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that when Dublin bookmakers put their advertisements in newspapers they state that their name, with Dublin added, is a sufficient address for letters; and will he state what special arrangements or privilege are made for the delivery of such letters.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) No special arrangements are made for the delivery of letters so addressed.

South Africa—Beer Duty in the Transvaal.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): To ask the Postmaster General, as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether he is aware that the duty on beer imported into the Transvaal is more than double the value of the article, and is a prohibitive and not revenue producing tax; and will he state what is the duty payable on a cask of beer exported from this country and the duty on a cask of beer made in the Transvaal.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxv., 147.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain, for the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*) The duty on beer imported into the Transvaal is at present that fixed by Law 4 of 1894 of the South African Republic, which has not been amended in this respect. It is 7½ per cent. *ad valorem*, plus a special duty of 3s. per gallon. The imports of past years show that this duty has not been prohibitive. There is at present no Excise duty on beer brewed in the Transvaal, but Customs duties are of course levied on the raw material imported.

South Africa—Loss on Sale of Blockhouses.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Postmaster General, as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether the blockhouses in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, which were taken over by Lord Milner from the War Office authorities for £50,000, have now been resold to the inhabitants of the districts; and, if so, will he state whether the re-sale has resulted in a loss; and, if so, how much.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain, for the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*) I have no later information than that given to the hon. Member on the 15th December last.†

Mails to Japan, Australia, etc.—Respective Times taken in Transmission by Alternative Routes.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid): To ask the Postmaster General the approximate time which is taken in the transmission of correspondence from London to Yokohama, Shanghai, and Hong Kong respectively *via* United States; also the approximate time from London to Sydney *via* Vancouver and *via* San Francisco.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Correspondence despatched from London via the United States reaches Yokohama in from thirty-one to thirty-three days, Shanghai in about forty days, and Hong Kong in about forty-three days. The approximate time occupied in the transit of correspondence from London to Sydney *via* Vancouver is thirty-eight days, and *via* San Francisco thirty-four days.

House of Commons Ventilation—Recommendations of Select Committee.

MR. WYLIE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the hon. Member for North Hunts, as representing the First Commissioner of the Board of Works, when the Report of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the Ventilation of the House of Commons building will be issued; and what steps, if any, have been taken during the recess to remove some of the insanitary conditions.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) The Select Committee found it impossible to conclude their inquiry last session, and it is proposed to ask the House to reappoint the Committee at an early date. During the recess the authorised improvements in the ventilation of the Commons Committee Rooms have been completed, and new fittings have been supplied to the sanitary offices on the ground floor terrace front, and mechanical ventilation has been introduced into them with excellent results. Other sanitary offices in the building will be dealt with in the same way as opportunities arise during recesses.

Women Typists in the Civil Service—Alleged Grievances.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, N.R,. Cleveland): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the petitions presented, in the early months of 1902, from women typists employed in various Government Departments relative to the conditions of their service; will he state whether any answer has been sent to those petitions; and whether the Treasury will be able to grant the improvements in the conditions of employment which are desired by this class of public servants.

(*Answered by Mr. Hayes Fisher.*) The Papers have only recently been laid before me. I am in communication with the various Departments concerned, and I hope that an early decision may be arrived at.

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† See (4) *Debates* cxvi., 1203.

Income Tax—Dates for Payment in England and Scotland.

MR. WYLIE: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer why taxpayers in Scotland are still being forced to pay income tax two or three months sooner than England, seeing that in 1901 his Department promised that both countries should be treated alike in future, and no pressure should be used in the one country which was not used in the other; will he arrange that this course shall now be followed; and will he also say the latest day on which income tax may be paid, without costs being incurred, in both countries.

(*Answered by Mr. Hayes Fisher.*) As the facts referred to are somewhat complicated, I have caused a Memorandum to be prepared, of which I am sending a copy to the hon. Member. He is at liberty to make any use of it which he desires. He will observe that there is now no ground for the impression that Scotland is more strictly treated than England.

Navy—Increased Pensions to Petty Officers.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can announce the date upon which the increased pension to chief petty officers becomes operative; and how it affects men whose period of service will have ceased before the forthcoming Estimates are presented.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) The new scale of pension for chief petty officers, sanctioned by Order in Council of the 16th February last, applies to all chief petty officers who may be pensioned on or after the 1st April, 1903. Chief petty officers discharged to pension before that date are not affected by the change.

Leicestershire County Council's Education Scheme—Board of Education's Objection.

MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he is aware that the draft education scheme framed by the Committee of the Leicestershire County Council was informally submitted to the Board of Education without the authority of either the Committee or the Council, and before it had been submitted to the Council for consideration; and that, in consequence of objections raised by the Board of Education to the draft scheme, it was withdrawn and another scheme prepared for presentation to the Council; and if he will state in what particulars the scheme originally prepared was not in accordance with the requirements of the Education Act; and on what grounds the objections of the Board of Education were based.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) I have nothing to add to my answer of the 20th instant except that an Education Scheme was submitted to the Board of Education by the County Council of Leicestershire on the afternoon of that day. In my judgment no useful purpose can be served by stating in answer to Questions in this House the purport or details of the various discussions or communications, sometimes extending over some time, which take place between the Board and local authorities, or members and representatives of those authorities, while a scheme is in course of preparation or while it is being settled for publication.

Ireland—Suggested State Lunatic Asylum for Alcoholic Lunatics.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has seen the Report read by Dr. Norman Connolly at the recent meeting of the Richmond Asylum, in which reference was made to the increase in the number of cases of alcoholic lunacy committed to that institution; whether he is aware that the Richmond Asylum authorities have, since the year 1900, made several representations to the Irish Government on this matter; and whether, in view of the state of the law as regards the care of alcoholic lunatics, and considering the revenue derived by the State from the sale of intoxicating liquor, he will recommend the establishment of a State Infirmary in Ireland for the treatment of persons who have become insane from excessive indulgence in intoxicating drinks.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The reply to the first and second queries is in the affirmative. The concluding part of the Question suggests an amendment and widening of the existing law which provides for the establishment of institutions for the reception of habitual drunkards under certain prescribed conditions. I cannot give an undertaking such as suggested.

Ireland—Fair Rents in the Trim Districts —Case of John Flynn, etc.

MR. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Land Commission are aware that in the case of John Flynn, Rathrone, Enfield, and other tenants in the Trim district, the landlords have had their applications to have second-term judicial rents fixed transferred from the county court judge to the Sub-Commission; and whether, in order to expedite the hearing of these cases, they will direct that a Sub-Commission court be held in Trim at an early date.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The originating notice of application to fix a fair rent in the case specially named in the Question was not served until the end of last October, and was transferred to the Land Commission in December. A list of cases from the Trim district is now in course of disposal. It contains, however, only such applications as were made at dates anterior to that referred to. There is no power to list cases for hearing out of their regular turn except by order of the Land Commission, which should be applied for in the usual way.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The War Commission.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War who is responsible for the preparation and authenticity of the summary of the evidence given before the War Commission which has been supplied to the Press; whether such summaries have been revised by the witnesses; whether the evidence already given will be laid before Parliament at once, and when the taking of evidence by the Commission will be concluded.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I assume that the secretary of the Commission is the person responsible for the preparation and authenticity of the summary of the evidence. I do not know if the summaries have been revised by the witnesses. No report has been forwarded to the Government, and it may be assumed, therefore, that no Papers will be laid till the inquiry is concluded. I am not in a position to state when the inquiry will be concluded.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: I wish to know whether, in accordance with invariable practice, the right hon. Gentleman has communicated to the Commission and to its secretary the fact that this question was going to be asked in the House of Commons, and what answer they had asked the right hon. Gentleman to give to it.

MR. BRODRICK: I am not aware that there is any precedent for Government laying such questions before the Royal Commission. If that is the case, I will certainly lay it before the Commission, but I think in that case the Question should be addressed to the First Lord of the Treasury. I have no authority over the Commission, nor had I any authority in the appointment of it.

* SIR HENRY FOWLER: I beg to give notice that I will repeat the Question to the First Lord, and I hope we shall get such an answer as is due to the House.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can explain on what grounds the conclusion was arrived at that the proceedings of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the conduct of the late war should be wholly secret, having regard to the fact of his statement in the House of Commons on the 12th June, 1902,† that the question as to whether the Commission was to be an open or a secret inquiry was a question for careful consideration, and that in all probability some parts of the inquiry would be conducted in private.

MR. BRODRICK: When questioned on the subject of the inquiry I could only give my opinion as to the probable course which would be adopted. I have no doubt the Royal Commission gave the matter careful consideration, but their decision was entirely a question for themselves, and the Government was in no way concerned in it.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cix., 499.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: But when the right hon. Gentleman said that the question whether the proceedings should be wholly secret was under consideration, did he mean under the consideration of the Government or of the Commission?

MR. BRODRICK: The Government can only appoint the Commission, which has itself to decide the course of procedure.

Surrenders in South Africa.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can inform the House what inquiries into surrenders in South Africa have been reopened otherwise than by the Royal Commission, and what officers who had been cashiered or placed on half-pay have been reinstated.

MR. BRODRICK: Some cases have been reconsidered, but in only one case has an officer been reinstated, when it was found that the Court which tried him had been illegally constituted.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Was that the Helvetia case?

MR. BRODRICK: No, Sir.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: But has not the officer in that case been reinstated?

MR. BRODRICK: That case is under consideration.

Parcels Post for Agricultural Produce.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether, in the interests of the tenant farmers, the agricultural labourers, and the general public of great Britain and Ireland, he will take steps to secure that agricultural produce may be forwarded by parcel post at reduced rates and under special conditions.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): I would refer the hon. Member to the answer which I gave on Thursday last, the 19th instant, to a similar Question put by the hon. Member for the South Molton Division of Devonshire.

Appointments to Postmasterships—Unsuccessful Candidates.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that a telegraphist named Mercer, of the Bristol Post Office, has applied for 160 vacant postmasterships since 1894; whether, seeing that during these periods clerks of less service, experience, ability, and salary have been the recipients of these positions, he will make inquiry into the case.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have no knowledge of the number of applications made by Mr. Mercer since 1894, but it is clear that he has not been considered by either my predecessors or myself the best qualified candidate for any appointment for which he has applied, and I see no reason for making special inquiry.

Cattle in the United Kingdom.

MR GEORGE WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he will state the number of cattle at the present time in the United Kingdom, and how that number compares with the same period in the year 1896.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The number of cattle in the United Kingdom (including the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands), on the 4th June, 1902, the latest date for which statistics are available, was 11,376,969. At the same period in 1896 the number returned was 10,941,655.

Aliens in London—Police Arrests.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many aliens had to be arrested last year by the Metropolitan Police, and if his attention has been called to the representations on the subject by the

Judges of the High Court of Justice, by the Recorder of London, by the Chairman of the Middlesex Sessions, and by juries, and what steps he proposes to take to save the taxpayer from the expense of maintaining these alien criminals during imprisonment.

THE UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. COCHRANE, Ayrshire, N.): I am aware that representations such as my hon. and gallant friend indicates have been made. It would be a matter of extreme difficulty to give trustworthy figures in answer to this question, but I have under consideration the best way of laying the necessary information before the Royal Commission which is now inquiring into the whole question of alien immigration.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: But I was given last November† the number of arrests up to October, so surely the Department has the information in hand?

MR. COCHRANE: My hon. friend had better put another Question.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: That is my Question.

Women on Education Committees.

MR. HENRY HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if his Board, in approving schemes for Education Committees, will see that each scheme makes provision for the inclusion of at least two women on the Committee.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): The Board of Education are advised that the Education Act only requires that a scheme should make provision for the inclusion of one woman on an Education Committee. The Board have not found any reluctance on the part of the County Councils to place women on the Education Committee, but in asking for the inclusion of more than one woman the wishes of the local authority and the needs of the area must in each case be considered.

MR. HENRY HOBHOUSE: Can the hon. Gentleman give me any information as to the number of authorities which have made such provision?

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: I have the information as to thirty-nine counties. In three provision is made for one woman member, in twenty-seven for two, in six for three, in two for four, and in one for five.

Railway Rates in Ireland.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if the Board of Agriculture for Ireland would be prepared to appoint a Departmental Commission to report upon the railway rates at present charged in Ireland, their effect upon the agriculture, trade, and industry of the country, and the steps necessary for amelioration of the present position. On 8th April, 1902†, you informed Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick) that "while far from saying that such an inquiry would not be useful, you were not at present prepared to recommend it."

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The Department of Agriculture is constantly investigating questions affecting railway transit and rates and obtaining information which would prove of utility should it ever be decided to appoint a Committee of Inquiry. The Department does not think, however, that the time has yet arrived for such an inquiry.

Technical Instruction in Ireland—Grant-in-Aid.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Belfast Corporation have adopted a resolution characterising the withdrawal of the grants-in-aid of technical instruction in Ireland as an evasion of Parliamentary responsibility, contrary to the understanding come to with local and educational authorities in Ireland, and unfair to the taxpayers of Ireland; and whether, in view of similar pronouncements by other public bodies in all parts of Ireland, he can state what action the Government propose to take.

MR. WYNDHAM: Representations have been made to this effect. I have stated that it has been decided that the existing grants, amounting to £3,500, shall continue, but that a limit to their expansion should be laid down, not as a final limit, but as a future point of departure for the reconsideration of these grants in correlation with other Irish demands, whether educational or industrial, which may be disclosed, and with the resources available to meet them. The limit is fixed, provisionally, in accordance with these considerations, at £7,000 a year.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxiv., 1358.

† See (4) *Debates*, cv., 1260.

Land Purchase in County Sligo—Land Commission Advances.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the circumstances under which a gamekeeper became purchaser of a non-agricultural holding situate in a congested district near Aclare, County Sligo; whether the purchase-money, amounting to hundreds of pounds, was advanced by the Land Commission; and, if so, whether it is usual for the Land Commission to make such advances to persons in such a position, who have had no previous connection with the localities in which they purchase.

MR. WYNDHAM: The purchaser in question was tenant of the lands purchased. The Land Commission report there were no grounds for refusing to make the loan, as the security for the advance was considered ample.

Imprisonment for Contempt of Court—M'Elligott's Case.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the case of John M'Elligott, a Protestant farmer from Shraugh, County Cavan, now two years in Dundalk gaol for contempt of court; and whether, after this long term of imprisonment, he can hold out any prospect of M'Elligott's speedy release.

MR. WYNDHAM: I stated in reply to a similar question put to me yesterday that the Executive has no power to intervene in such cases. To purge his contempt the prisoner must apply to the Master of the Rolls, the committing Judge.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN: May I ask if this terrible abuse of power——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order.!

MR. MACVEAGH: Is there any precedent in this country for a man being kept two years in prison without trial?

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): May I ask——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The Question on the Paper has been fully answered.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I wish to ask if the Judge has power to inflict imprisonment for life?

*MR. SPEAKER: That is not the Question.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): May I ask whether, in view of this and similar cases, the Government will undertake to introduce legislation to prevent——

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give notice of that Question.

Marine Works in Ireland.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the claim of the port of Kenmare, County Kerry, to receive assistance under the Marine Works (Ireland) Act has been favourably considered; and, if so, when will effect be given to this decision.

The following Question also appeared on the Paper—

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now say what works it is proposed to execute under the Marine Works Act, and especially whether he proposes to provide for the improvement of the harbour of Portnablagh and the construction of piers at Portnoo and Kincasslagh, and of a pier or boatslip at Falchorrib.

MR. WYNDHAM: Saturday next has been fixed for a conference between myself and representatives of the Councils of Congested Districts Counties to discuss the whole question of the allocation of the funds provided by this Act. For the present, therefore, I would ask hon. Members to defer these Questions.

United Irish League—Inniscarra Meeting.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork Co., Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that during the holding of a public meeting, under the auspices of the United Irish League, at Inniscarra, County Cork, on Sunday, 1st February, a body of police was posted on the evicted farm of Mrs. O'Callaghan, Ballyshoneen; and will he state the nature of the duty for which these constabulary were detailed.

MR. WYNDHAM: Directions were given by Government that the meeting should not be allowed to be held on the farm in question. The police were there to give effect to these directions. The meeting was held in the vicinity.

MR. SHEEHAN: Is it usual to plant the police on evicted farms?

MR. WYNDHAM: It is the practice of the Irish Government to see that the police are placed where they can carry out their instructions.

Betting Offices in Ireland.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a number of betting offices and houses are being kept open daily in Armagh, Ballymoney, Cork, Coleraine, Londonderry, Limerick, Maryborough, and Waterford, and will he reconsider the advisability of taking proceedings in their cases under the Betting House Act of 1853.

MR. DELANY (Queen's Co., Ossory): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, I beg to ask him whether he is aware that the principal parties who frequent betting houses in Maryborough are officials of His Majesty's Prison——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

*MR. DELANY: Who are also disciples of Mrs. Smily's, of Birds' Nest fame, Dublin, as well as of the hon. Member himself.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must call attention to the fact that it is gross disorder for an hon. Member to persist in putting a Question after he has been called to order, and whilst I am standing.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The police report that, though vigilant watch has been maintained, no evidence has been obtained to show that any offices or houses have been kept open for betting in any of the places named. A prosecution was instituted for betting under an archway in Armagh, but was abortive, as the King's Bench Division decided it was not a "place" within the meaning of the statutes. In Londonderry, where a bye-law has been passed against street betting, a conviction was obtained. In Cork there have been seven successful prosecutions since 1896.

Royal Irish Constabulary—Pay and Pensions.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state when he proposes to introduce a Bill to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee appointed in May, 1901, to inquire into the pay and pensions of the Royal Irish Constabulary; and when he intends to give effect to that portion of the recommendations that requires no legislation.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The Estimate for the next financial year will contain provision necessary to give effect to such of the recommendations of the Committee as do not involve legislation. With respect to the question of legislation, my hon. friend will understand that in view of existing demands upon the time of the House, I cannot fix a date for the introduction of the measure he refers to.

Alleged Forged Will—Case of Thomas O'Keeffe.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork Co., N.E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can explain the cause of delay in the prosecution of Thomas O'Keeffe, of Cuniglass, County Cork, for forgery and perjury, as ordered by Mr. Justice Wright in a forged will case tried before him on the 10th December last.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Mr. Justice Wright did not direct a prosecution in this matter. The case will be laid before my right hon. friend the Attorney General in a day or two. The delay, which is unavoidable, is caused by the necessity of obtaining copies of the voluminous documents in the action.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM: Will steps be taken to prevent this person leaving the country in the meantime?

*MR. WYNDHAM: Any precautions that are necessary will, of course, be taken.

Irish Local Taxation Fund—Expenses of Midwives.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the result of his promised consideration to the matter of the allocation of the Irish Local Taxation Fund; and whether, in that consideration, he found himself able to set aside a sum for the repayment to boards of guardians of half the salaries and expenses of midwives employed by these boards in the various dispensary districts, on the same principle as half the salaries of medical officers is refunded.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am not yet in a position to recommend an allocation of the unexpended balances. The proposal in the second part of the Question was duly considered when the Local Government (Ireland) Act of last session was being drafted, but the Government felt unable to make any concession in the direction suggested.

Afforestry in Ireland.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether it is intended to give effect to the recent recommendation of the Departmental Committee on British Forestry with reference to the acquirement by the State of areas for practical demonstration; and, if so, whether he will consult with the President of the Department of Agriculture in Ireland as to the advisability of securing in Ireland a similar area.

MR. HANBURY: The evidence taken by the Forestry Committee has not yet been published, and I am therefore not at present in a position to come to any decision with regard to the proposed provision of demonstration areas. It is clear, however, that the recommendations of the Committee involve important financial considerations, which will require careful examination both at the Treasury and by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, as well as by myself. We shall certainly consult the Irish Department of Agriculture on the subject before any action is taken.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the intention of the Government to appoint a Commission to inquire into the promotion and extension of afforestation in Ireland, in view of the fact that the Commission appointed for a similar object as regards England and Wales has recently issued its Report.

MR. WYNDHAM: Some of the recommendations in the Report of the Committee on British Forestry are applicable, in principle, to Ireland. The Irish Department is at present conducting a special survey of existing woodlands, and lands suitable for forestry operations. Such a survey is necessary to enable the Department to consider the measures to be adopted to give effect to the recommendations of the Report in question.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Is it proposed to make any provision for the preservation of existing plantations in Ireland?

MR. WYNDHAM: I can make no announcement on the subject.

The Colonial Secretary.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury by which of the other four principal Secretaries of State are the duties appertaining to the headship of the Colonial Office Department, in the absence from the kingdom of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, discharged; whether there has been any departure from the position whereby in the absence of a Secretary of State the duties of the Department of State allotted to him are discharged by one of the other principal Secretaries of State; and if, during the absence of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, there has been any departure from this practice, what are the reasons on which such departure is based; and what precedents, if any, are there for the departure from such practice.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The hon. Member asks this question under the impression, apparently, that the Colonial Secretary has entirely severed connection with the office of which he is the head. That is not the case. The absence of the Colonial Secretary throws on the Under Secretary—a most competent person—a great deal of work and a certain amount of responsibility which would naturally devolve on the Secretary of State; but, of course, the Secretary of State can be communicated with by cablegram. As to the signing of documents which require to be signed by another Secretary of State, the ordinary practice is being followed.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: They are signed by another Secretary of State?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes.

Reform of Parliamentary Procedure.

MR. HENRY HOBHOUSE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will consider the desirability of appointing a Select Committee to consider the proposals for the reform of the Procedure of this House, which were placed on the Paper last session by the Government and by private Members, but were left undiscussed for want of time.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Included in the proposals which remain unfinished among the Standing Orders, I hope that there is at least one which is practically uncontroversial dealing with consolidation. But I will consider whether the remaining proposals I made last year ought, or ought not, to be sent to a committee. I should like, however, some time for reflection.

MR. HENRY HOBHOUSE: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider as to whether other proposals from unofficial Members of the House might not be dealt with by the Committee?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think that if a committee is appointed it might as well be given plenty to do. They might have a roving commission over the Standing Orders of the House, but I do not know that these inquiries come to much. I have personally felt that as to the Rules dealing with procedure from day to day the Leader of the House knows as much as any commission or committee can teach him. Though there may be legitimate differences as to whether he is right or wrong, it is not on account of the ignorance of any proposal that the opposition to the Government in such matters arises. Therefore, though I have not the same hopes as my right hon. friend, I will consider the suggestion.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Are there not many hon. Members who object to the proposal of consolidation?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Perhaps I was wrong in saying uncontroversial, but I have gathered that the great body of opinion in the House without restriction to Party is in favour of it.

NEW BILLS.

INCEST BILL.

"To provide for the punishment of Incest," presented by Colonel Lockwood; supported by Sir John Kennaway and Mr. Henry J. Wilson; to be read a second time upon Friday next, and to be printed. [Bill 51.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (WALES) BILL.

"To enable owners and occupiers in Wales and Monmouthshire to have effectual control over the Liquor Traffic," presented by Mr. Herbert Roberts; supported by Sir Alfred Thomas, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), Mr. Samuel Evans, and Mr. William Jones; to be read a second time upon Friday, 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 52.]

PREVENTION OF POLLUTION OF RIVERS AND STREAMS BILL.

"To make further and amended provisions to prevent the Pollution of Rivers and Streams." presented by Sir Francis Sharp Powell; supported by Mr. Wilson-Todd, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Sir John Dorington, Dr. Farquharson, Mr Brigg, Sir John Brunner, and Sir Walter Foster; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 17th March, and to be printed. [Bill 53.]

PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the qualification and tenure of office of Medical Officers of Health and Inspectors, and to make further provisions relating to superannuation allowances for such Officers and Inspectors; and for other purposes," presented by Sir Francis Sharp Powell; supported by Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Talbot, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. Cripps, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, Sir Michael Foster, and Sir John Batty Tuke; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 17th March, and to be printed. [Bill 54.]

TRADE UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES BILL.

"To legalise the peaceful conduct of Trade disputes, and to alter the Law affecting the liability of trade union funds," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Bell and Mr. M'Kenna; to be read a second time upon Friday next, and to be printed. [Bill 55.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Local Government (Ireland) Acts," presented by Mr. Duffy; supported by Mr. Reddy, Mr. Conor O'Kelly, and Mr. Roche; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 56.]

AGED PENSIONERS (No. 2) BILL.

"To provide Pensions for the aged deserving poor," presented by Mr. Samuel Roberts; to be read a second time Friday, 22nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 57.]

BANK HOLIDAYS (IRELAND) BILL.

"To make provision for a Bank Holiday in Ireland on the Seventeenth day of every March," presented by Mr. O'Mara, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Dillon, Mr. T. W. Russell, and Mr. Hemphill; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 58.]

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Army Organisation.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [23rd February] to Main Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Which Amendment was—

> "At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'but we humbly regret that the organisation of the land forces is unsuited to the needs of the Empire, and that no proportionate gain in strength and efficiency has resulted from the recent increases in military expenditure.'"—(*Mr Beckett.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

(2.40.) MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham) said that two years since, upon an unlucky Friday, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War came down to the House of Commons to move his now famous Army Scheme in what was, by general consent, thought to be a very admirable speech. The right hon. Gentleman, if he might say so without presumption, always made a very good speech, and their experience the preceding night in no way fell short of what they were led to believe was his accustomed Parliamentary skill. But he had ever noticed that the right hon. Gentleman always made a very good speech when he was in a very difficult position: the more there was to be said against the cause he was defending the better the speech he made. It would be admitted by all sections of the House that the speech he delivered on the previous day was one of the best he had ever delivered in the whole of his Parliamentary career. But there was one thing about the speech which was a fault—the right hon. Gentleman proved too much. After all, they who had friends in the Army heard what the soldiers said about the Army Corps Scheme; and they heard, too, what the officers said about the length of their commands. Was all that a mere delusion? Were all the statements in the newspapers, written with some responsibility—were the statements made by "uninstructed" persons in the country-mere delusions? Had they at that moment got what the right hon. Gentleman seemed to prove on the previous day—three real live efficient Army Corps, and were they to have in another six weeks time three more?

The right hon. Gentleman established his case in the face of much incredulity the preceding day by means of two statements which were variously put before the House. The first was the White Paper about Army Corps, which was issued in the morning, and the second was the statement in the debate about recruiting and about the general strength of the Army. He wanted to know what was the relation between the two statements. What relationship was there between the immense number of men the right hon. Gentleman said he had got and the skeletons which were produced on the White Paper? That he believed to be a valuable and useful line of inquiry. The White Paper gave a very rosy and glowing account of the Army Corps system. To judge by it one would think that the whole work had already been achieved, and that there was nothing more to do. But, unfortunately, not ten days before the White Paper was distributed another publication from the War Office came out by authority, and in regard to it he might observe that it was not produced with reference to any particular debate in the House of Commons. He alluded to the Army List, which hon. Gentlemen were, no doubt, aware contained the names and disposition of every battalion and every battery in the British Army. It was most carefully compiled and was kept up-to-date. He observed a very great discrepancy between the White Paper and the *Army List.* The latter bore the date 9th February; the former was issued on 22nd February. According to the White Paper out of twenty-five battalions the First Army Corps ought to have already possessed twenty-four, but when they looked in the *Army List* they found that it actually had only twelve battalions in the Aldershot command. Admitted that four more were out of the command there still remained a discrepancy of eight battalions. Had these arrived at Aldershot between the dates of the publication of the *Army List* and the issue of the White Paper? Really the *Army List* was very instructive, for he found further that although the First Army Corps had twenty-four battalions, the 1st Division had only one brigade, and the 3rd Division, which should have two brigades, had none at all. General Bruce Hamilton was still on leave, as he had been for more than four months, the time which had elapsed since he was appointed to the command of the 3rd Division of the First Army Corps.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): He has not taken up his command; he is still on half pay, and he will not take up the command until the troops are there.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL said the right hon. Gentleman's interruption proved his point. He was perfectly well aware that General Bruce Hamilton had been appointed, but not gazetted. He was appointed and his name appeared in the *Army List*; but why had he not been gazetted? Because we had an institution in this country, which many people thought ought to be done away with—the Treasury, which in its nasty crabbed Treasury way would not pay for an officer unless it could be shown that he was in real military employment. But to continue his investigation into the *Army List.* The 4th Division of the Second Army Corps—on Salisbury Plain—was commanded by Sir Charles Knox, who had a complete staff. He ought to have also two brigades of infantry. But he had no infantry at all.

According to the *Army List* and the White Paper, in the Second Army Corps there were nineteen out of the twenty-four battalions which were needed, so that it seemed rather unfortunate that Sir Charles should not have one out of the eight which he required. In drawing the attention of the House of Commons to these very curious and remarkable discrepancies he did not want to prove too much. He did not suggest for a moment that the right hon. Gentleman had been disingenuous in his conduct towards the House, but he did think he had gone up to the limit of Parliamentary tactics in presenting his case. He did not suggest for a moment that the right hon. Gentleman had not got the men which he said he had, but what he did suggest was that when they compared the two statements—and perhaps the Press, who were watching this matter, would find it interesting to publish them side by side—they would see that it was as easy as possible for the War Office, with its great power of manipulating the very complicated figures, to present a very different complexion on almost exactly the same set of facts. That was all he wanted to establish. He must give one more instance of that power of manipulation—that power of presenting a case. The facts, as they knew, were most complicated; an enormous number of factors had to be taken into consideration, and at every stage of the calculation the balance of advantage was given to the side on which it was desired to establish a principle, so that at the end of the calculation they had a very imposing array. When the right hon. Gentleman introduced the Army Scheme two years ago he was very anxious to show the large addition it made to the Regular Army. He said that for an inconceivably small sum they were adding no fewer than 11,500 men to the Regular forces. Yesterday, however, he asked: "Why complain of the Army Scheme as a source of expenditure: it only adds 5,000 men to the Regular Army." He could quite believe both statements were perfectly accurate and true; he was only endeavouring to establish that although the comedy was always the same it made a great deal of difference whether they looked at it through the right or wrong end of the opera glass.

No one doubted, as far as he knew, that the British Army still existed; no one doubted that there were a considerable number of persons who were on its muster rolls, as well as upon its pay lists, and no one doubted that, with unlimited time and money, it was possible to produce most things in England—even the six Army Corps of the right hon. Gentleman. But he had always felt that the attempt to impose on the Army that great organisation at a time when it was very much exhausted by the strain and drain of the South African War, and at a time when the War Office was very much over-pressed by carrying on the war, would result in wide-spread disorganisation. It might very often happen that stragglers, spread far and wide over a country as fugitives on the line of the retreat, made in their aggregate very nearly as great an array as that which marched out in the morning, but their fighting power was very different. How could the disorganisation produced in the Army by the unwise policy of the last two years be better illustrated than by the fact that, though recruiting had never been so good, though the barracks were full, though the Army was 12,000 above strength, though the cavalry were considerably above their strength, though, in fact, the right hon. Gentleman had everything he had asked for and wished for, yet he had not yet produced one single field Division? At that moment he could not count on more than nine brigades properly formed out of twenty-three promised. Bearing in mind the extreme flexibility of the figures when once they got into the hands of the War Office, and the most ingenuous methods of the Department, he was bound to say that he could not quite accept the rosy picture of the recruiting for the Army drawn by the right hon. Gentleman.

Yesterday morning he received a letter from an officer commanding one of the largest depôts in the country, who had had ample opportunity of seeing the class of recruits we were getting. [Cries of "Name."] No, he would not disclose the name because he understood that efforts had been made to bring home to people the fact that statements that leaked out were likely to lead to inquiries, and so forth. But his friend wrote that the greatest number of the men enlisting were unskilled workmen, and that their main reasons for joining the Army were hunger, short time employment, and poor wages; he added that he never came across a case in which a recruit had any idea how much pay he would receive, they would generally say they had been earning from 20s. to 30s. a week, and they seemed to think that he would regulate the amount they were to receive. His hon. friend the Member for Plymouth on the preceding night made a very clear and exhaustive examination of the last Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting. Why had they not that Report for this year before them? He hoped they would see it before they had another discussion, for then the House could see whether the evil features of the previous Report had disappeared. The right hon. Gentleman had been rather severe on "the uninstructed persons" who during the recess were liable to make statements which perhaps were not precisely accurate Among those "uninstructed persons" the right hon. Gentleman no doubt included Lord Hardwicke, the Under Secretary for War, who on Friday said the Army Corps were largely upon paper. Business men were all very well in politics, but when they got to the War Office they were apt, at the beginning of their official careers at any rate, to let the cat out of the bag. Six weeks ago one "uninstructed person" said that Lord Grenfell would have no Army Corps to command; that there was only himself, although perhaps he was a host in himself, or something of that sort. That statement was perfectly true today, and it would remain true, according to the right hon. Gentleman's own statement, until midnight on 31st March. He should look forward with interest to that date, because it would witness a most interesting event—the birth of an Army Corps. Some people thought that when General Grenfell arrived at Colchester at the head of a large staff he would be welcomed by the Mayor and Corporation, and that on every road converging on the town long lines of horsemen and artillery would be marching. There were different ideas as to what would happen; but what really would happen would be a little disappointing to those who would be looking for spectacular effect. He would point out to the right hon. Gentleman, who perhaps had not given them the consideration they deserved, that it was on the Volunteers he would have to rely to form part of his Army Corps. Every Volunteer would on that occasion be following his ordinary avocation in the usual manner. The Militia would be called out for training at the ordinary time, and the Household Cavalry Brigades and the Guards Brigades would remain to brighten and adorn the streets of London. What would happen would be this. The right hon. Gentleman would wake up in the morning, and lo! there would be only three Army Corps, but when he came home in the evening he would have established the fourth Army Corps by a mental process and a scratch of the pen. The scattered battalions, which might be called anything else as well as an Army Corps, would become the Fourth Army Corps, and General Grenfell with his staff, costing £10,000 a year, would be there to command them. It was very easy to make Army Corps like that. Indeed he was astonished at the moderation of the right hon. Gentleman. A hundred battalions were the infantry not of one Army Corps, but of four. Why should he stop at one when he could just as easily make four, and they would be equally effective. If the Army Corps Scheme had been introduced to the House frankly as a convenient and innocent measure of decentralisation it might not have been attacked, but everyone knew that it was not introduced as that, or anything like it. It was introduced with a flourish of trumpets. It was introduced as the means by which England was to become a great military nation, and as the means by which the taxpayer should be cajoled into paying in time of peace all the sums of money drawn from him to keep up the Army during a period of war. Hon. Members knew it for themselves; but he ventured to think there was hardly a man in the country who took the slightest interest in public affairs who did not believe that for an increased expenditure, which the right hon. Gentleman thoroughly explained, the country was actually going to have a great, brand new, powerful, and effective weapon, far more powerful than had ever been heard of or seen before. When he saw operations of that kind which were to be achieved in a few weeks he felt he was perfectly justified in taking every opportunity of describing such a proceeding as a humbug and a sham; and, with all respect to the right hon. Gentleman, against whom he had not the slightest personal feeling, and to the Government, he would certainly take the opportunity of repeating those statements on every convenient occasion that might arise. He would ask hon. Members to cast their minds back to a period of two years ago when the right hon. Gentleman made his speech introducing his scheme. The right hon. Gentleman made some fine promises in that speech, by which he thought everyone who heard them was carried away. He said he would keep a Regular Army at home of 150,000 men, a Reserve of 90,000, a Militia of 150,000, a Militia Reserve of 50,000, Yeomanry 35,000 strong, and 250,000 Volunteers, allowing for some reduction under the more stringent conditions of service. The net addition said the right hon. Gentleman in conclusion, under this scheme would therefore be 126,500 men. That was the right end of the opera glass, but last night that addition became a matter of 5,000 men.

MR BRODRICK: Regulars?

MR WINSTON CHURCHILL said that whether Regulars were included in the scheme or not made a very great difference in the presentation of the figures. It was possible to show all those figures of the War Office and produce a different effect according to the desired intention. The net addition was to be 126,500 men and even allowing £50 000 a year for the staffs of the new Army Corps it was to be achieved by an expenditure of a little under £2,000,000 a year. He would ask the House to let him examine that statement of the right hon. Gentleman's *seriatim*, in order to see how far they had progressed. The right hon. Gentleman promised 11,500 Regulars. He now said that they had 5,000. He promised an organisation which would give twenty-three brigades of Regular infantry, and to each of the last three Army Corps one Regular Division. Now he noticed in the White Paper which had been issued that the last of the six Army Corps, instead of having a Regular division dwindled down to two battalions. Instead of twenty-three brigades they had, according to the *Army List*, only nine. The right hon. Gentleman promised 90,000 Reserve, and by an arrangement last year that was to be increased to 150,000 in the near future. Yesterday the right hon. Gentleman said the number was 60,000, but during the recess, in reply to his hon. friend, he estimated the number at 51,000. He did not blame the right hon. Gentleman because his Reserve was depleted after a great war, but the depletion of the Reserve was a fact they had got to reckon with, for until the Reserve was filled up he did not see how they would mobilise the Army for war. The right hon. Gentleman promised 150,000 Militia—he was speaking in round figures—and in order to obtain them he offered an extra bounty of £3 a year. Like most inducements which were conceived in a hurry, that inducement appeared to have been ill-considered, for the actual strength of the Militia had not appreciably increased. It had not increased by more than 1,000 or 2,000 since the bounty was given. But in the meantime there was a permanent charge of £300,000 a year. When they spoke in the Amendment of no proportionate gain as compared with the cost, he thought hon. Members who were associated with it, had a right to point to that one figure as alone proving emphatically all they asserted. The right hon. Gentleman promised a Militia Reserve of 50,000. There was a Militia Reserve of 30,000; he was glad it had been done away with, and that only 10,000 of that Reserve now remained. For the new Reserve an appropriation had been taken in the Votes for the year, for, he thought, £150,000, but, so far as he understood, there was not a man on that Reserve at all. He was comparing the inducements set before the House by the right hon. Gentleman with what they had actually got. The right hon. Gentleman promised 35,000 Yeomanry, who were to be part of the 126,500 men he would provide for the Army. He welcomed what the right hon. Gentleman had done for the Yeomanry. He thought it was the best part of his scheme, but out of 35,000 men—the right hon. Gentleman would correct him if he were wrong—he understood that there were only 17,000.

MR. BRODRICK: We expect 29,000.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL said he agreed. He did not expect the whole of the scheme to be carried out in a day. That would be absurd to expect. There were two items in the right hon. Gentleman's proposals in which he had succeeded thoroughly and absolutely, and in which the expectations the right hon. Gentleman himself entertained were surpassed. When the right hon. Gentleman promised 250,000 Volunteers there were 288,000 in existence, and according to the information he gave last night he had not yet quite achieved the figure which he had hoped for, but he himself had every reason to believe that in the very near future the right hon. Gentleman would have realised all that he expected in regard to the Volunteers. The other matter in which he had realised his expectations was in regard to expenditure. All he had described was to be produced for a little under £2,000,000 a year over and above what was before asked for. Then next year the right hon. Gentleman asked for an increase of pay which meant another £2,000,000 a year—a permanent continuous charge. He would not say anything about what that increase of pay meant to India; but he wondered hon. Members interested in India did not say something about it. This year he apprehended—indeed the White Paper, which told them little else that was worth knowing, indicated it as distinctly probable — that there would be another barracks loan to house the troops, although he understood that they had houses in other parts of the country in which they now resided. Of course, if the right hon. Gentleman got his troops he had a right to ask Parliament for the barracks to house them, but he could not subtract the cost of the barracks from the total cost of the scheme; and if the right hon. Gentleman estimated the cost of his scheme without including the barracks necessary, he was not quite sure that the right hon. Gentleman gave to the House the impression he no doubt wished to convey. Let the House judge the scheme by its results.

No doubt the right hon. Gentleman had tremendous difficulties. Every one who knew even as little as he himself did about Army administration and the War Office would sympathise with the extreme difficulties with which the right hon. Gentleman was confronted. Therefore, he to some extent sympathised with the defence of the right hon. Gentleman yesterday. What was that defence? It amounted to this: "It is not my fault; all this expenditure is not due to my Army Scheme at all, but to that wicked Lord Lansdowne and to the smooth, persuasive manner of the present Chief Secretary." All the right hon. Gentleman did was to transform their handiwork into something more closely resembling his conception of what an Army ought to be. He had superadded to it in addition and gloried in the result. The right hon. Gentleman had boasted in the House of what he had done for the Army; he had boasted at the Colonial Conference that the expenditure on the Army had been raised by £9,000,000 a year, and that being so, he (Mr. Churchill) felt that it was the right hon. Gentleman who must stand up against the growing storm of criticism which was surely coming, and which would rage until this aggravated system of Army reform had been for ever cast aside. It had been said that the House of Commons had assented to this scheme, but he did not think the House of Commons ought to be made the scapegoat in this matter. After all, they were not very well qualified to judge of this scheme, coming as it did from a responsible Minister. He did not see why the House of Commons should have been blamed for accepting the scheme two years ago, when the war was still going on, and when the thing of paramount importance was that the Government should be supported. He did not then rejoice at the scheme. He was glad to say he was the only Conservative Member who had the great and lasting honour to vote against it. Two years had now gone by, and he invited any hon. Gentleman, apart from partisanship, to put the question to himself: Could any one deny that it would have been much better for the Army, the country, and the right hon. Gentleman, if he had only consented to wait until calmer times, when with more deliberation he could have introduced a scheme and applied the lessons actually taught in the war. It was the contention of every hon. Gentleman who agreed with the Amendment yesterday that this scheme had not yet been achieved in practice; that it was not in fact carried out. He held to that still. He was convinced by the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman yesterday that he was not to blame because the facts were not such as could be substantiated. But whether the scheme had failed in practice or not it was an entirely wrong one. It had caused much disturbance, very little reform, and a very large outlay which had not given any appreciable gain in safety. While millions were being spent ungrudgingly in order to make believe this scheme was being carried out, or in order that it might be carried out, a very few thousands were grudged for another very necessary and urgent Army object.

One of the most remarkable features of the British Army for a great number of years had been its number of generals. The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, whose knowledge of the Army was encyclopædic would correct him if he were wrong, but he was told that in the British Army there were fewer bayonets and fewer sabres and more generals than in any army in the world except that of Venezuela. The scheme of the right hon. Gentleman had tended to make that disproportion more apparent, because if the scheme were carried out there would have to be six Army Corps commanders with complete staffs, eighteen infantry generals with complete staffs, thirty brigadier generals with complete staffs, but there would not be in return the great safeguard that the men would be trained in times of peace by the men who would command them in time of war. The right hon. Gentleman had partly carried that out. He had set up a large number of staffs. He had set up more staffs than tactical units, and we were paying for more staffs than tactical units. We were paying generals of Divisions for commanding brigades, and generals of Army Corps for commanding what, under the old system, were only districts, and we were paying staffs of Army Corps for commanding what hardly amounted to more than a mixed Division. While all this was going on, the Intelligence branch put in a request for a small increased grant, amounting to something like £3,000 a year—they wanted rather less than four officers to look after Asia and little things like that—and, so far as he was advised at present, they had not yet obtained that grant, although the new Army Corps were to cost £60,000, although there were more officers than were necessary to command the same number of troops—whose salaries came to far more than the £3,000 they asked for—yet, nevertheless, this £3,000 had not been granted.

Rather more than three years previously he was present at the battle of Spion Kop, and the fact that had struck him was on what tiny trifles the fortune of battles depended. Had there been, on the morning of the battle of Spion Kop, a few good maps of the country with the troops, they could have taken up a position on Spion Kop as nearly impregnable as the one they did take up was untenable. The hill was held all day at a great sacrifice of life, and had there been a little oil to work the signalling lamp at night, so that communication might be kept up between Sir Charles Warren's headquarters and Colonel Thorneycroft on the hill, that sacrifice might have been taken advantage of and reinforcements sent up. He was very much impressed by that. When one heard the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean say, as they had heard yesterday, that although we were allied with Japan, and ran considerable risks through our alliance with Japan, and that the only gain to us might be the assistance of her army, yet, nevertheless, hardly an officer in the British Army could speak Japanese, and none were being sent to learn it or to be about with the Japanese army and learn the conditions of that army. It was excusable to feel some indignation when one contemplated an Administration spending millions on their fads and fancies at home, and grudging a little to save disasters such as those from which the country had suffered in recent times.

In order to carry out this scheme every Regular soldier, every single shilling that could be got from Parliament for making soldiers, every battalion, however thin it might be, was necessary. There was no margin of funds for other things of the most necessary kind. Although the price of two battalions would make our Army as good as any army in the world, and the price of one battalion would give the men free tickets to the rifle ranges and find them in ammunition, although it would brush away all the troubles with which Volunteer colonels had been so manfully contending, although the cost of the infantry which had been added in the last few years, 30,000 men, would pay for a brand-new fleet in the North Sea, not a single penny could be spent. When he saw how much the reputation of his right hon. friend was involved in this Army Scheme, and saw on the other side these urgent and vital facts, he could not but think, in spite of his great talents in debate, nevertheless, his usefulness in the position he held must be thought to be considerably circumscribed.

The right hon. Gentleman had complained on the previous day of the fact that the critics of his policy had favoured him with most inconsistent advice, and he had said that although the people who attacked the War Office were agreed that whatever the War Office did it was extremely foolish, they were agreed in nothing else. That was not his view. It had, he thought, been the general consensus of opinion—he would not go so far as to say that all who spoke on the Amendment were agreed upon it, but he thought their views converged and combined to enforce the same great principle—and if this view were confirmed in the Division the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman would have to go, and some other scheme would have to be put in its place. They were agreed that of the fund for Imperial defence the Navy must have the largest share, and that if the Navy wanted more the Army must do with less. They did not want a large Regular Army for home defence. They were agreed that they ought to place, for home defence, greater reliance on the Volunteers, Yeomanry and Militia forces, or forces organised therefrom. There was a consensus of opinion on the complacency with which the dwindling of the Volunteers was being watched by the War Office, without any effort being made to retain the men, or any inducement being held out to them to stay on, and there was a general consensus of opinion that the scheme of the War Office had not been conceived in the public interests. No one was under any obligation to provide an alternative scheme of his own. They contended that if they established their principles the military authorities would be able to form a scheme in accordance with them. It was the duty of the House to establish a principle, the duty of the Cabinet to propound a scheme, and the duty of the military authorities to administer it. The Army in this country, up to 1897, was not a bad Army, nor was the system a bad system. He did not agree with those who suggested that it was altogether rotten and absurd. It was one which stood a good deal of knocking about in theory, and in practice produced the Army of which they had heard in South Africa. Moreover, it cost only £18,000,000 a year. Since then, Army expenditure had been increased by nearly £12,000,000, and he put it to the Prime Minister—he did not ask him to reply, because the answer would probably not be what he wished to receive, but he asked the right hon. Gentleman to answer in his own mind, a tribunal for which he entertained the most sincere respect—did he really contend that they had now an Army as much stronger than the Army of 1897 as £30,000,000 was larger than £18,000,000? The linked battalion system had broken down. On a small scale he believed it to be the best of all systems, but since the foreign garrisons were so much increased the balance between battalions could not be maintained except at ruinous and extravagant cost. This system would have to be modified by *force majeure*, and in view of the actual facts. South Africa, the grave of many reputations, was also the grave of the linked battalion system.

The right hon. Gentleman had taken as the basis of his scheme a garrison of twelve battalions in South Africa. A trustful and confiding disposition, however amiable, did not always lead to the most successful results in the conduct of the affairs of State. Did anyone believe that in the next three or four years our garrison in South Africa would be measured by twelve battalions? He did not know what reason would be given—perhaps it would be that of local security, or that Africa was a good strategic position from which to bring forces to India, or that it was a fine place in which to train soldiers, or that a large army in Africa might be made a great colonising instrument, or that the Colonial Secretary had expressed an opinion in favour of a large army in

Africa, or some equally good reason—but the House might be perfectly sure that the garrison there would largely exceed the dimensions anticipated by the right hon. Gentleman. That being so, the linked battalion system would have to go. Whether the necessary modification would be obtained by a partial application of the system, or by calling Africa a "home station," or by some system of having two Armies, a one-year Army with a large Reserve for home defence, and a longer service Army for abroad, was a matter of detail with which the House could not properly or adequately deal, but one with which the military staff would not have the slightest difficulty in dealing once they knew exactly the requirements they had to meet. The linked battalion system was going; he could not say he regretted the fact, as it had too often been made a lever to extract from the House of Commons supplies of men which otherwise would never have been voted, and to justify a great many of the increases which had been made under the *régime* of the right hon. Gentleman.

But the Secretary of State claimed for his scheme two advantages quite apart from the linked battalion system, viz., that it would produce a larger expeditionary force for foreign service and a much stronger Regular Army for home defence. If the scheme were carried out that would undoubtedly be true. But both those provisions were unnecessary. For foreign expeditions one Army Corps was quite enough to fight against savages, but three Army Corps were not enough to fight against Europeans. As to a stronger Regular Army, either we had the command of the sea or we had not. If we had it we required fewer soldiers; if we had it not we wanted more ships. These remarks were doubtless what the right hon. Gentleman would call unimpeachable platitudes, an expression which in politics usually meant precepts to be noted and then set aside. Various reasons had been given to justify the request of the Government for an increase of the expeditionary force. It had been said the increase was necessary because of the recent South African experience. Was there any truth in that? There might have been some reason in increasing the expeditionary force before the war, but where was the reason now? There was obviously much less reason on that account, because it was hoped that South Africa was now permanently outside the region of physical force. As to Canada, no one would contemplate the idea of three Army Corps operating in Canada; the United States were no more prepared immediately to invade Canada than we were prepared immediately to defend her. Was it in regard to India that this increase was demanded? The House were incompetent to deal with questions of strategy; there was no use in their talking about what could or could not be done on the Indian frontier, but they could contrast the views of experts on the subject. Before the South African War, there was a provision of reinforcements for India; he had always understood that, in the first instance, it was about an Army Corps. That provision was established on the opinion and reputation of many distinguished soldiers such as Lord Roberts and Sir Donald Stewart, whose names the Government would not have hesitated to invoke on other occasions. What had occurred to make a larger provision necessary now? It was said to be the lessons of the war. The contrary was the case. South Africa had taught us two things which made our position in regard to India much better than it ever was before; the first was the increase in the defensive powers of modern weapons, and the other was the fact, hitherto undemonstrated, that we could count on many more men to go abroad to serve the country in time of emergency than had ever been supposed. Before the South African War, it was not known that the Militia would volunteer practically *en masse*, although under no statutory obligation, or that the Volunteers would produce a large number of men capable of serving side by side with the finest troops in the Regular Army.

There was in existence an idea against which he wished respectfully to warn the House, viz., that if by taking thought we added a cubit to our military stature, we should be able to make war against a great Power easily, cheaply, smoothly, conveniently, without trouble or worry, that the battle would be won without casualties, and the campaign concluded almost without disaster, and that when the triumph which would speedily attend the operations was won the vanquished would cheer with hardly less enthusiasm than the victors—and Parliament would adjourn for a General Election. The real truth was, that a war with a great Power, whatever its issue, would end in broken hearts and straitened purses; hunger would be in our streets, and ruin in our market-places; and when all was over, our most formidable commercial rivals would be found entrenched in all our old vantage grounds. England, through the character of her people—who did not mind fighting, but detested drill—necessarily had very largely to depend, and her insular position made it possible for her so to do, in great crises, on an army of emergency.

There were two kinds of success—initial and ultimate. Both were very desirable, and should occupy the attention of those who had the care of public affairs; but what he would most earnestly press on the notice of our statesmen was, that they should not risk the certainty of ultimate success in order to gain triumphs at the beginning. The certainty of ultimate success required the power of finally mobilising and bringing into the field the whole of the immense resources of the State. By only one agency in the world could that be assured. He did not defend unpreparedness, but, with a supreme Navy, unpreparedness could be redeemed; without it, all preparation, however careful, painstaking, or ingenious, could not be of any avail. The present tremendous Army expenditure, and the demand for men, and the demand on Parliamentary time and public attention now being made by the Army, undoubtedly challenged in a very serious manner our naval supremacy. There was a time when such an Amendment as that under discussion would have been commended to the House from considerations of correct and thrifty finance, or of international goodwill; they might have been told that a reduction of armaments left more money to fructify in the pockets of the people, or to minister to reforms that were urgently needed. A strong Volunteer citizen Army, however satisfactory to defend the soil on which it lived, was, after all, a cumbrous weapon with which to attack the land of others. But a strong British Navy was undoubtedly one of the greatest of all ultimate factors in maintaining the peace. Something, too, might have been said about our living on an island, and consequently not having the same dangers as continental countries, and therefore having devolved upon us a greater responsibility, a higher moral duty, to do something to stop this mad, cut-throat race of armaments. Those days were gone, and those arguments belonged to the past or the future; they were not the arguments upon which his hon. friend's Amendment claimed support. They based their case upon material grounds, and upon material grounds alone. They asked their case to be judged only by the standards of physical force. They claimed to have proved that the present employment of public money upon the Army was in its character wasteful and excessive, and in its results did not produce a proportionate return in fighting power. They held that large reductions and economy were possible in the Army, both in money and in men upon the regular establishment. As for the men, it seemed to be the opinion of the House that quality should be studied rather than quantity, and that what could be saved from the Regular Army could be better devoted to strengthening either the Volunteer forces or the Navy. This Amendment was intended, by the most deliberate means, to bring home and force, in the first place, on the attention of the Prime Minister, a matter of urgent and vital public importance, which, despite what had been said in this debate, unless it was lifted by his exertions from the condition of confusion, both of thought and action, in which it now lay, could not fail seriously to injure the reputation of His Majesty's Government.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) said that a good deal of water had run under the bridges during the last eighteen months, during which time he did not think the War Office had done so badly. He deprecated the somewhat flamboyant speeches which had echoed in that House, and which had been promulgated in the papers. Those speeches had been most brilliant, and he wished that he could have made such speeches himself in reference to swine fever. He did not, however, think that those speeches would do much good in the direction of reforming the War Office. Perhaps the House would pardon him if he gave one or two arguments showing why he thought this Amendment was inopportune and not required at the present moment. He wished to call attention to the Militia force, for which nobody used to care a brass farthing, and which was now a sort of Cinderella to the Army. Hon. Members had called upon the War Office to abolish the Militia Reserve, and the War Office had not only done this but they were creating a real Reserve of Militia. For that he thought the War Office deserved praise. With regard to the treatment of the Royal Garrison regiment, a change in the strategical localisation of the Army had been effected, and they had found a way by which old soldiers might still remain with the Colours. With regard to recruiting, this had always been the bugbear of every Secretary of State for War, but the War Office during the last eighteen months had done a good deal towards solving the question of recruiting. Barracks in a good sanitary condition had been built all over the country, the pay of the soldiers had been raised and the terms of enlistment reduced, and that was the only way to get recruits. A great deal had been done for the private soldier, who had been better clothed, and fed, and allowed to go out in plain clothes; in fact, he had been treated more like a man than he had ever been before. In this respect he wished to produce the testimony of another authority besides the Secretary of State for War, namely, that of a distinguished soldier, General Sir William Gatacre, who said that in his district they were getting so many Army recruits that he did not know what to do with them. If the Secretary of State for War had done anything to solve the tremendous question of recruiting, then at least he deserved the thanks, and not the censure, of the House.

The term "Army Corps" did not smell very sweet after Mr. Gathorne Hardy's experiment years ago. He got eight Army Corps together on paper, and they were afterwards laughed out of existence. He could not say whether Army Corps were suited for this country or not, he was an agnostic on that question. All he had to say was that the right hon. Gentleman's scheme held the field and nothing else had been suggested. The hon. Member for Whitby said he did know of a scheme, but nothing would induce him to divulge it to the House, although he said that under certain circumstances he would reveal it to the Secretary of State for War. He did not see how anyone could get together six Army Corps in eighteen months. How could they get them with 40,000 of the troops in South Africa, and the rest of the Army disorganised and all to pieces, as it was now at home. They would have to wait till these Army Corps were matured, and, in his opinion, he did not think they would have to wait very long. The question of the general staff had been alluded to in connection with the National Committee of Defence. He had been told that there was a Service Members Committee, and they formulated a resolution last session which they intended to press as an Amendment to the Address calling upon the Government to take steps to see if this Committee was to be a sort of nucleus to the general staff. The Prime Minister, however, at Liverpool, spiked their guns and practically moved their Amendment himself, and now he understood they were to have something of this kind which would be made a nucleus of the grand general staff. The want of such a staff accounted for all their faults in the Crimean War and during the South African campaign, and he now understood that the War Office had accepted the proposal of the First Lord of the Treasury to form such a general staff. It was suggested by Lord Hartington's Committee of 1888 that some such general staff should be formed. It was not supported on the ground that a general in the field of action would be able to know what to do without any general staff at all. Shortly after that Lord Rosebery was Prime Minister of this country. Lord Rosebery, the apostle of efficiency, tried to run the British Army on the cheap by allowing it to get short of powder. He would, with the greatest pleasure and alacrity, vote against the Amendment. He congratulated the Secretary of State for War on sticking to his guns.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Two years ago, when the right hon. Gentleman introduced the scheme of so-called Army Reform of which we have heard so much today, I felt it my duty to move an Amendment in condemnation of it, in almost the same terms as the Amendment which has now been moved to the Address, and, therefore, there can be no doubt as to the course I shall take in cordially supporting that Amendment. I ventured to say then in anticipation, what has now become apparently the deliberate opinion of a great number of hon. and gallant Members who, on that occasion, voted against me. Now, Sir, neither then nor now have I, and those who voted with me in the same Lobby, any Party taint whatever in our attitude. I have always endeavoured, through the many years in which I have been more or less connected with this Army question, to keep the subject of the Army, and of the public service generally, out of the arena of Party politics altogether, and I hope that that will not be departed from on this occasion. It is greatly to be regretted that to-day a technical interpretation of this Amendment does give that colour to it to a certain extent. It is, of course, as we all know, the theory that every Amendment to the Address must be resisted by the Government, and that, whatever be the circumstances of that Amendment, if it is accepted, that fact is regarded as being as fatal to the position of the Government as if a vote of censure had been passed on them.

In passing, may I express the hope that we may find a way of getting rid of this restraint on our debates. Of recent years such inroads have been made on the opportunities of private Members bringing forward subjects of this kind, that they are driven in a heap, as it were, on to this debate on the Address, and, amid all this, we are always told, when we complain of not having sufficient opportunity, that the Address is open to us. But it is most desirable, surely, to get rid of the incubus which vitiates our debates and prevents the expression of the real genuine opinion of the House. That however, by the way. We ought to discard if we can, not political bias only, but also those prejudices and prepossessions which I am afraid beset these military questions almost more than any other. The question is so vital and so important that we ought to approach it with an open mind. I do not say for a moment, in speaking on this subject, that people should be ready to forget or to leave behind them their fixed opinions, if these opinions are based on wide views and a full knowledge of the facts; and also I would admit that with those fixed opinions we ought always to keep ourselves in active consciousness of the fact that as time goes on the circumstances upon which those opinions were formed may materially change. But, as I think all of us must know from our own experience, there are many men, military and civilian alike, who are swayed in these matters by prejudices and by partial knowledge. You may have a most distinguished officer who has served through a long career with the greatest credit, and who has had every opportunity of informing himself of military facts, and yet who has served during the whole of that time in such circumstances that he has not been induced to take a broad view of questions—such a question for example, as Army organisation. I take, for instance, the case of an officer who has served a long life as a regimental officer. He may have excellently discharged all his duties, and yet may never have been able to look far beyond the efficiency of his own regiment and the necessities of his own duties, and may never have taken the wide view of the general situation which is necessary. Another distinguished officer may have served abroad all his days, and he may remain at the end of his service in a large degree ignorant of those difficulties, those impediments, those delicate influences which have to be taken into account in everything which affects the recruiting and the administration of the Army. Well, I should hope that in this debate at all events we shall all of us endeavour, whether administrators, creators, or critics, to keep an open mind.

The right hon. Gentleman took exception to something I said the other day of his scheme having been a panic scheme, and justified his action by stating that it was called for by the general sentiment of the House and the country. I quite agree with him that at that time there was a considerable military fever and a great deal of alarm as to our position. It is a satisfaction to me to remember that I raised my humble voice in deprecation of any such panic. It no doubt existed, and I raised my voice against it for two reasons—firstly, the action taken in a panic is seldom soundly considered and permanently successful action; and in the second place, that panic or fever might be used in order to guide us, and drive the people of this country into a conception of this as a military nation —as a nation dependent upon military power—whereas I hold that we shall go very far astray indeed in our policy in other matters besides military administration if we forget for a moment that this Empire is not a military empire, but an Empire cemented and maintained by trade and commerce, and amity and friendship amongst the different elements which compose it.

As to this particular proposal, I ventured to say, as the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken has said, that we ought to wait. The right hon. Gentleman's hands were then presumably full with the war, and he ought to have waited until the lessons of the war, of which we have heard so much, were more fully mastered and seen in their proper perspective, and also until the generals, who were best able to give him advice, had returned from the scene of action. That was the reason why I spoke of the scheme having been a panic scheme. There are two principal divisions in the subject with which we are dealing. First of all, we find fault with this Army Corps scheme, and, in the second place, we wish to direct the attention of the House and the country to the larger question of military expenditure generally.

On these two subjects I will venture to say a few words. I will take the technical matter first. This Army Corps Scheme had the effect, to a large extent, of dazzling the eyes of the people and of soothing the nerves of the country. But the right hon. Gentleman himself, in speaking of it, now says he was not the inventor of it. No, the name was familiar to us. In the late seventies the system of the grouping in units of Army Corps was introduced into the Army, with the effect of greatly increasing the bulk of the *Army List*, but with no other effect I ever knew. I always regarded with suspicion and dislike that new departure. The only thing that I could see that could be said for it was that which the right hon. Gentleman said yesterday—that it did furnish a standard up to which you might work. But it was open to great misconception, and the right hon. Gentleman has set himself to make these Army Corps real. If the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to say so, he has many good qualities. Among others he is not only intensely patriotic and intensely laborious, but he is also intensely serious, and if I may venture to point to what may be considered a defect in his character—not in his private but his public character—it will be rather surprising to him when I name it, because we are all startled when we see ourselves in the looking-glass. I mean the defect, as it appears to me, is that he has not a sufficient sense of humour. He takes too serious a view of a question. He does not allow for the play of human nature, and having these six Army Corps on paper, he immediately took them seriously and treated them *au pied de la lettre.* He treated them as they were never intended to be treated, and that is the cause of all this mistake. That was before his German experience, when he saw, I presume, Army Corps in action. But I think I have traced to its proper source the origin of the mistake which the right hon. Gentleman made.

Now, what is an Army Corps? An Army Corps is a collocation of military units in certain dispositions, under a certain hierarchy of military control. The right hon. Gentleman said that it was not a German institution that he had introduced into this country. I quite agree with him; but it is a continental institution. I am not aware of any other country in the world that has Army Corps on a continental scale except continental nations. It represents a formation which they find by their experience most expedient and convenient for their purpose; but there are two points which distinguish them completely from us. In the first place, they have a conterminous enemy. When they go to war they can arise and march over the frontier as they are; and, therefore, the whole Army Corps having been located in its own district moves to the frontier and passes into the enemy's country unaltered in any respect. The next difference from us is that the whole of Europe, with the exception of a very few parts, is unenclosed country, so that this body of troops with its particular formation can be moved with the most mathematical accuracy in every direction. There are some districts, no doubt, but not numerous, between Calais and Bucharest, where the country is enclosed, but for the most part it is open country, for the simple reason that the climate does not permit of cattle remaining in the open; they are kept in houses and not like with us, in the fields, which do not need to be enclosed. And, therefore, when the crops are off the ground there is nothing to prevent the march of an Army wherever it chooses to go. With us, where is the Army Corps, *qua* Army Corps, capable of being used? What was the use of an Army Corps formation in South Africa? Was any part of the campaign in South Africa conducted in the formation of an Army Corps? No, Sir; because it would not have suited the situation, and the result of that consideration is that if we send an Army Corps abroad for any purpose, the first thing we have to do is to break it up and send it to the port of embarkation, and start afresh at the end of the voyage. When we turn to our own country and the question of the defence of this island, we are met with the same thing. There is not a more enclosed island in the world, and the same may be said of the island of Ireland. It is so enclosed in fact, that it is a matter of complaint that the great difficulty with us is that we cannot find room for the training in open country of our troops except in one or two districts. It is on that ground, I suppose, that the suggestion has been made that in future a large force of our troops should be maintained in South Africa. That seems to me to be one of the strangest reasons put forward for that proposal—that there should be abundant opportunity for training. I only hope, with regard to that suggestion, that a great deal of consideration will be given to the proposal before it is adopted. I will mention two circumstances which, I think, are of great weight. The first was mentioned by the Secretary of State last night, when he asked what effect this would have on recruiting in England? When a man joins the Army he does not join it for foreign service, but for a mixed home and foreign service; and if he knew that he would be taken out of the country immediately when he enlisted, or that when he was made fit as a soldier he was to go to South Africa or anywhere else, and then perhaps to be transferred from there to India, and would never, in the whole course of his service, have a chance of being in this country at all, I venture to say that it would have a most prejudicial effect on the recruiting for the Army. There is another point urged; that South Africa is half way to everywhere—half way to India and to Hong-Kong, and to every place we can imagine where troops would be required. Yes, but the conveyance of troops across the ocean is a matter of transport, and where are the transports to be found in South Africa? Suppose you had 25,000 men in South Africa, and you wanted to use them in India, the first thing you would have to do would be to engage shipping in this country and send transports out to pick the troops up and carry them to India from South Africa. I mention the proposal by the way, because I think that although it has some attractive features in it, it is certainly one which requires most careful consideration.

Now, if the Army Corps system, which the right hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to create in flesh and blood, is, as I have proved, unsuited for us in time of war, is it suited for us in time of peace? The right hon. Gentleman named a list of improvements that have been recently made in decentralisation of all kinds, of stores and duties. I did not gather that any one of these could not have been effected under the district arrangement we had before—which arrangement had the advantage of being much cheaper than that he has adopted. As to the other advantage put forward—I should have mentioned this when I was speaking of the warlike use of a *Corps D'Armee*—it was that the men would go into the campaign under the command of the same officers under whom they had been trained, and that every one would find himself, on his right hand and on his left, in company with a neighbour with whom he had been engaged for years. Now, that is inconsistent with the necessary constitution of our Army, where it has always been held that the battalions for home service ought to move about. It would be inconsistent, too, with the comparatively short tenure of staff appointments and the command of regiments. All these arrangements completely militate against the idea of a stereotyped machine of that sort being employed in the way I have referred to. Now, several arguments have been used which show that there are lurking in certain minds fallacies which I would have thought had been disposed of long ago. One hon. Member made light of the Reserve. He asked, "What was the use of this Reserve, because it was put in the first line at the commencement of a campaign, and therefore nothing was left behind?" He cannot but be aware that this is the use made of the Reserve by all the nations of Europe that have a Reserve. As to the system of double battalions, I shall have something to say. The hon. Member for Oldham used a phrase which has become a standard phrase, when he said that the system of double battalions has broken down. Well, to prevent misunderstanding as to the meaning of the Amendment, I must say a word or two on these elementary questions; and I think it is all the more necessary because a generation has arisen which knew not the original controversy, and a great many men who speak intelligently on this subject are not really aware of the rationale of the reasons for the system which existed and which, as the hon. Member for Oldham said, continued down to the year 1897, and did very good service for the defence of the country and the Empire. I take, to begin with, the short service in order to lead up to the other. Does the House bear in mind why this short service was introduced? It was simply because we could not get recruits in this country for long service. That can be proved from the Reports of Royal Commissions over and over again, and from the evidence given before them. It was no strange fancy of the so-called Army reformer, full of fads and fancies of his own. It was the absolute necessity of the time, that unless you took men for short service you could not get recruits for long service —I mean by long service recruits men whom we kept for their whole lives and most of whom died in our hands. If we are to have short service, then arises the difficulty of adjusting this to the duties of foreign garrisons. You must have some means of drafting sufficient men to the units abroad, and in order to accomplish that purpose you must have a certain number of regular soldiers at home. I read in the Press, and I have heard in the course of this debate, observations to the effect that we do not require any Regular troops at all at home. Now, how could your battalions in India be maintained unless you have some troops here? Then, you must have depôts; but depôts are most extravagant, and a most inefficient form under which you can train men to arms.

MR. BECKETT (Yorkshire, N.R., Whitby): How about the Marine depôts?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Marine depôts are very small things, and you can carry them on, as you used to do, with a limited number of recruits. Besides, the conditions of the Marine service are entirely different from those of the Regular Army. The Marines serve for three years on board ship and one year at home. The men of the Regular Army have to go for seven or eight years to India. There are many ways I could point out in which you could not find any analogy which could help you between the Regular Army depôts in England and the depôts for the Marines or the old Presidency troops. Therefore, what are you to do? You must have a certain number of them for training purposes. Why not take the benefit of them and make use of them for other purposes? The system of double battalions is no idle dream or spiteful invention of some too active-minded reformer. It results from the necessities of the case. I confess to the House that I think it ought to have been carried further; that instead of the double battalion arrangement there ought to have been a multi-battalion system, which would have given us greater facilities. Let it be remembered that there was another memory in the minds of men in those days—the memory of the Crimea. In that war there were only certain corps which managed to maintain their efficiency throughout the whole of the war, and those were the multi-battalion corps—the Guards and the Rifle Brigade. That conveyed a great lesson, and was a strong inducement to adopt such a system as that I speak of. The average draft to foreign battalions is 180. The House can see what a hole that makes in the battalion at home; and, therefore, this system never can be popular with the officers of the home battalion, because they are always drilling, and always parting with the men as soon as they become efficient. They never have a decent force to show on parade; and so their prejudices—and I sympathise with them immensely—are against this system, and if they looked at it from the interests of themselves or their battalions they would condemn it. But, on the other hand, if you look to the interests of the Army at large, you would not take that view. It is said that this system has broken down. What do you mean by breaking down? When it was adopted there were to be seventy battalions abroad and seventy battalions at home. But that has never been realised. We have occupied Egypt, and sent troops to different places, preventing the possibility of that balance being maintained. But, as far as the balance has been maintained, the system has worked admirably. I am quite ready to agree that, if you increase your forces abroad inordinately, the confusion becomes so great that you must resort, for the purpose of the battalions abroad, to some modification of the system. Such a change of circumstances compels one to modify the strict opinion one has formed, while retaining it in principle. But it is forgotten by many that this system has worked exceedingly well, and resulted in our sending such a large force to South Africa when the war broke out.

MR. BECKETT: What was the state of the battalions at home, described by Lord Wolseley as "squeezed lemons"?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That is a phrase which has stood those who attack the system in good stead. But Lord Wolseley was one of the originators of the system, and has always been a defender of it. As the question of Army organisation is condemned in the Amendment, I must disclaim any desire to include in it any general condemnation of the system which I have described. What is more pointed at is the Army Corps system which the right hon. Gentleman introduced two years ago. But now I come to the larger and more comprehensible question—that of Army expenditure. I do not like this practice of comparing the Army with the Navy expenditure. There is constant complaint that the Army has more than the Navy or the Navy more than the Army; that because the Army Estimates are larger in one year than the Navy Estimates, we ought to build one or two more ironclads to redress the balance. That is not the proper way to discuss the question. The proper way to look at this subject is to see that we should not spend a penny on the Navy that is not justified by naval wants, or a penny on the Army that is not justified by Army wants. We all believe that the Navy has the first claim, and that the wants of the Navy ought to be fully and even generously supplied. I do not know whether great additional expenditure is required; but there is always the danger in naval expenditure that the more we do in shipbuilding the more we stimulate other nations to keep pace with us. But I fully endorse the *dictum* that the Navy has the first claim upon us, and that it ought to be maintained in the fullest efficiency. But the fact we have to face—whether we like it or not—is that the national expenditure is increasing beyond the patience, the endurance, and almost beyond the resources of the people of this country. Why is it that those who approved by their votes the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman two years ago are now attacking it? It is nothing else than the salutary and sobering effect of the income-tax. My right hon. friend the Member for Montrose said that the tax-gatherer was the great schoolmaster, and he has been busy educating all classes in the country. The result is this change of opinion in a great body of the community. It is quite clear that the military expenditure must be reduced, or, at least, checked. But, before going further, I say again what I said last week—that the first thing we have to do is to inquire into the military requirements of the country and determine what, in present circumstances, they are.

The hon. Member for Oldham has said that up to 1897 our Army was a good one and sufficient for our purposes. I have no reason to doubt it. The idea was then that we should never contemplate anything more than an expeditionary force of 70,000 or 80,000 men; and that was more than accomplished with the machinery and material that we had. The question is, What has caused since then an increased demand on the Army? If the Army were strong enough in 1897, why should it need to be stronger now? If the expenditure of £18,000,000 were sufficient in 1897, why should we now require an expenditure of £30,000,000? We want an inquiry by a competent and responsible authority, not only into the general question, but into the particulars of the question, to see precisely what we ought to provide for. I have some hope that this Cabinet Council of Defence may give an opportunity for this sort of inquiry. It ought to be a deliberate and careful inquiry, and I should not object to its being a slow inquiry, if it were adequate. But do not let me be understood as altogether appreciating the merits of the particular arrangements explained to us by the Prime Minister. I am old-fashioned in this matter, and I think it is the constitutional duty of the Executive Government to determine this question. When I read of the Government's chief professional advisers—the Commander-in-Chief, the First Sea Lord, and others being members of the Committee—and not merely having the most ample opportunities for putting their views before the Council—which, of course, is most necessary—I think that a somewhat singular situation is created. These officers have only one responsibility. The Cabinet is responsible financially, as well as administratively, but these officers have only an administrative responsibility.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Council has no administrative responsibility.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: These officers are responsible to their departments and professions for putting forward the claims of their branches of the service, but they have no responsibility for finding the money. That is the difference. I frankly say that if I were a Quartermaster General or a First Sea Lord, and were serving on that Council, I would pile up my demands in order to make myself secure; because it would be no part of my duty to find the money. That would not be done beyond conscience and reason, but it would be the tendency. When the First Lord made his statement to the House, he said with great *naïveté* that his proposal does not interfere with Cabinet responsibility, because all the decisions of the Council come under review by the Cabinet. Yes, Sir; but the Council are to be the Prime Minister, the Secretary for War, the Lord President, and the Colonial Secretary.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: No, no; the First Lord of the Admiralty.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes, the First Lord of the Admiralty, but not the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but whoever they are, they are the Prime Minister and his principal colleagues; and who is to tell me that the rest of the Cabinet, who know nothing about the matter, or, at all events, have no special knowledge, are going to override a solemn resolution come to by the Prime Minister? If it has any effect at all it cannot but diminish the responsibility of the Cabinet; and, with all good-will towards a scheme of this sort within certain limits, I cannot go so far as that.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I entirely differ.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I may not understand the plan—we shall hear more about it, no doubt, by-and-bye, but as far as it has been explained it seems to me gravely open to these objections. I say we should look round and determine what it is we really require for the defence of the Empire, both naval and military. You ought to determine what is needed according to the circumstances—you cannot have finality and then to set about supplying it. Now, the right hon. Gentleman has shown no disposition during the last six or seven years to check the increase of the Army and the expenditure upon it. In seven years the Army has been increased by 54,000 men. I am quite aware of the pressure brought upon the right hon. Gentleman in the Press and in this House more than anywhere. There is nothing he has done that has not been received with cries of approbation and delight. But we must be stern in this matter, and say that he ought not to yield too readily to pressure from Members of the House of Commons. No doubt it is difficult often to resist, but the question now is, as expenditure has increased to such an extent, how can you reduce it? It is never easy to reduce the number of men. I doubt whether the right hon. Gentleman is alive to the effect of what is being done. I will give one small instance of the sort of thing I refer to. Last year the right hon. Gentleman introduced a scheme to give the soldier the option after three years of continuing his service and receiving another 6d. a day. I am favourable to short service and to elasticity in the terms of service, and so that commends itself to me. But what I do say is this, that the greatest dead-weight we have in the Army consists of the young men whom we must recruit young, but who are not fit for foreign service or service in India. The age was raised from eighteen to nineteen not many years ago, and it had immediately a most disastrous effect. The men must be taken young, and that causes a great increase of the Army at home. The right hon. Gentleman succeeds in getting his recruits easily, mainly owing to the want of employment. Now, under his new scheme, no man can go to India until he has served three years, and in that way the right hon. Gentleman has increased this dead-weight. At the present time a man can go to India if he has served one year and is twenty years of age; but the right hon. Gentleman will not send him there after a year's service if he can come back at the end of three years and claim his discharge. Until he makes the option he must remain at home. This new arrangement does not come into force until next year, but I should like to know whether any proper calculation has been made of the expense.

The first thing to be decided is what the force of the Regular Army ought to be, and the strength of the other forces as well. There must be a mixed force for home defence; and I do not agree with the hon. Member, who contributed an excellent speech in seconding the Amendment, in the somewhat strange argument that to train Volunteers and Militiamen with Regulars, or Regulars with Volunteers and Militiamen, in some mysterious way would spoil them both. I believe that it would improve both. The whole country will insist, and the right hon. Gentleman must make up his mind to this, on a full recognition of the Militia, the Volunteers, and the Yeomanry who have played such a prominent and successful part in the recent war. They cannot now be snubbed or neglected, and they must receive the training which will make them efficient, and their place in the work of defence must be defined. But they must not be overdone or overburdened. It is obvious that an excessive annual training would have a most damaging effect on the force if it interfered in any way with civil employment; and I would venture to suggest what has always appeared to me to be the best settlement of that difficulty. It is that they should on first being enlisted be subjected to a somewhat long and severe course of training, and then a smaller and less irksome training each year afterwards will suffice. I am inclined to think that that is the solution of the difficulty. It is by developing this home force, it is by avoiding grandiose and ambitious schemes, it is by patiently considering the requirements for the defence of these islands and the Empire, and by adhering to the standard which is set up—it is thus we shall be able to provide for the security of the country and at the same time to lay no undue burden on the already over-weighted taxpayer.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): Whatever we may think of the arguments of the hon. Gentlemen who put forward this Amendment, I as one of those who are standing here, so to speak, on their defence, cannot have one word to say against the way in which the prosecution have brought forward their case, and I want to admit to the fullest possible extent my knowledge that those Gentlemen who have spoken on, and who are going to support, the Motion are not animated by any animus against the Government, but are simply endeavouring to lay before the country and the House of Commons what they consider to be the requirements of the country. The right hon. Gentleman opposite and other Members have appealed to the Government to have an open mind on this question. I confess I do not quite understand what an open mind on such a question is; because, if I take an open mind to be the attitude assumed by the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken, it seems to consist in supporting all the arguments of the Government, and at the same time voting for the Amendment against them. I am willing to admit also that from these debates, as a general rule, nothing but good can come, and that reforms in general have always come from Members of this House, though they have been opposed by the Minister for War for the time being. The hon. Member—or the ex-hon. Member, for Woolwich; I hardly know when he is in the House or out of it—gave himself full credit for having secured the Council of Defence, but I think the Army reformers are too moderate. I was an Army reformer before I was in office. I think they should take all the credit they possibly can, and not credit for any particular thing. Every point in the scheme which is now cavilled at has been advocated in the strongest way by the Service Committee, and was adopted by the Secretary for War at their instigation, and after due discussion in the House.

There is another thing the War Office cannot complain of, and that is the number of schemes that are invariably put before it. Everybody who has a relation, however distantly removed, who was ever in the Army, has a scheme for Army reform. It is like an infantile disease which nobody escapes, and I am bound to say I am not immune myself. I wish to speak of my own scheme for this reason: It has been alleged that there are people at the War Office in favour of conscription. On this particular point I have not only spoken, but, on one occasion, written. I wish to make my position perfectly clear. I have a scheme which does involve conscription, which I did advocate, and which I do not for one moment say that in my heart of hearts I do not, however, believe to be the right scheme. But, at the same time, I have to see things as they are, not as I would like them to be, and I have to consider that my own scheme, which consists of an adequate long service voluntary Army abroad, and an extremely short service compulsory Army at home, is impracticable, at all events at present; and, that being the case, I have to drop any idea of seeing that scheme adopted, and back up to the best of my ability any scheme which I think will adequately take its place.

There is a matter from which Army reform suffers to an extraordinary extent, and that is that schemes are proposed, most carefully thought out and put into execution, but, because in the first instance they do not turn out the successes they were expected to be, there is a strong inclination on the part of the country, and sometimes of officials at the War Office, to follow the example of the children who pull up a plant and look at its roots to see whether it is growing. The consequence is that schemes which, if left would have developed, are often hurriedly cast aside, and then after some years we have to return to the schemes which, if they had only been left undisturbed, would have been in working order.

No alternative schemes have been put forward. The mover of the Amendment says he has one up his sleeve, while the scheme of the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight is that of an armed people—a people armed, but not organised. Surely that is a principle which would not be accepted, even by the supporters of the Amendment.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight) said the people of the Free State were very well organised.

*LORD STANLEY: I do not know whether the hon. Member has read General de Wet's book on the subject, but that does not show that the organisation or the discipline in the troops of the Orange River Colony was so extraordinarily good.

MAJOR SEELY was understood to say he spoke only in comparison—meaning that the people of the Free State were better organised for war than were the present Volunteer forces by the War Office.

*LORD STANLEY: The question of organisation is the principal thing we have to discuss, because it is the Army Corps system that is attacked. My right hon. friend has stated very distinctly that he attaches absolutely no importance to the name, but that he attaches the greatest possible importance to the organisation which is being carried out under the name. I quite admit that if the organisation is to be compared with foreign organisations, Army Corps against Army Corps, the name may not be quite appropriate; but I look upon "Army Corps" as a name for an organisation in which it is our ambition to gather together such complements of troops as are held to be in the right proportions for use in the field—to bring together under one man the right number of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, and to decentralise as far as possible all questions of administration and expenditure. The hon. and gallant Member for the Heywood Division of Lancashire asked whether Lord Roberts approved of this scheme. I saw Lord Roberts to-day, and he told me a fact which may be interesting to the House. In 1879, when in Afghanistan, he was sent for by Lord Lytton, the then Viceroy, to attend a conference on the re-organisation of what were then the Presidency Armies. He was asked by the Committee to draw up a scheme for them to consider. He drew up a scheme consisting of the Army Corps into which India was afterwards, under him, divided. He can, therefore, be said to be not only the sponsor of the present scheme, but the father of the Army Corps scheme which was carried out under him in India.

LIEUT.-COL. GEORGE KEMP (Lancashire, Heywood) said he quite understood that such a scheme might be advisable for India, and that Lord Roberts might advocate it there, but the question he asked was whether Lord Roberts was in favour of an Army Corps Scheme for England, and whether he was consulted before he came back from South Africa.

*LORD STANLEY: Of course, there is only my word for it, but I hope the hon. Member will take it. Lord Roberts told me this morning that he fully considered the scheme before it was put into operation, and that it has his unqualified approval at the present moment.

Granted that there must be some organisation and some Army, it is for us to consider what the duties of the Army are. I am perfectly ready to admit, as a general principle, that our Army must be subservient to the Navy, that our Navy is our first and principal line of defence; but still there are other duties which must fall on the Army. Our Empire is partly insular and partly continental. As far as the insular part of our possessions is concerned, there is not the slightest doubt that the principal defence must be in the Navy. But there are duties which must fall on the Army, and in regard to which the Navy must, to a certain extent, be subservient. First of all, I would put the defence of India; secondly, the defence of the coaling stations; and, thirdly, the defence of this country against any possible invasion. In regard to the defence of India, the mover of the Amendment expressed it as his opinion that it was only a bugbear.

MR. BECKETT: As the opinion of experts on the frontier.

LORD STANLEY: And I think he quoted as an expert a Russian General. I cannot help thinking that if the Russian General sees those remarks in the paper he will be only too glad to cultivate the acquaintance of other Members of the House. But who are the authorities on the frontier? We can deal with them only through our responsible advisers in India; we are bound to go by what they say. Quite recently I have had an opportunity of speaking on this subject to men who, after all, are the greatest experts in the matter, and they do not look upon it as a bugbear. They look upon an attack as, at all events, something practicable, and though they have no doubt as to the result, their confidence exists only so far as this country is prepared to give them the support they require. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Northumberland spoke of South Africa, and pointed out that one of the greatest faults in the management of that campaign was that we did not have sufficient troops before the outbreak of the war. Now, Sir, I ask if it is good in that place, is it not equally good in India? Ought we not to be absolutely prepared to send troops to India before the war breaks out and not wait until after war has broken out. If hon. Members agree to that, what is the use of putting forward a proposition to send out the Militia or the Imperial Yeomanry?

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: Nobody ever suggested that an expeditionary force should be kept to reinforce India.

LORD STANLEY: I think it is better to be prepared to put the maximum number you are asking for, and not put in a part and wait for the other half until Parliament has given you sanction. With regard to the defence of the coaling stations, that is a point upon which we shall all agree, for we all desire that those bases should be kept intact for the use of the Fleet by the Army. It has now become one of the greatest bones of contention as to whether there will be, or could be, an invasion of this country. With that point I am naturally not competent to deal. I quite admit that the onus of protecting this country from invasion must rest with our auxiliary forces, and they ought to be thoroughly organised to the best of their ability; and we ought to lose no hint as to how to resist any attack that might be made upon our shores during the temporary absence of our Navy. I come now, therefore, to the question of the number of men required for this purpose. In this matter, are we not rather fighting with one hand tied behind our backs, because nobody would wish anybody in a responsible position to deal with the actual eventualities which might arise, and at the same time stint the number of troops you would send? Therefore, a great deal of this scheme must be taken on trust. The hon. Member who moved the Amendment said that if details are given to the military authorities they ought to be given to the House of Commons. With that statement I entirely disagree.

MR. BECKETT: I said that a general reason ought to be given which would satisfy the public.

LORD STANLEY: But what is the general reason? I have endeavoured to say what I consider the policy is. It is to send sufficient troops to keep India, and enough to amply safeguard the whole of our coaling stations, and to rely to the greatest possible extent on our auxiliary forces in case of invasion. The question is—How many troops are required for the first two purposes which are not to be met by auxiliary forces? It is the whole question of the Regular Army that is dealt with in this Amendment, and it is a question as to how many Regular soldiers can be sent abroad, and whether they shall be sent. I know that the Defence Committee has been reconstituted. Some hon. Members have asked whether the Estimates for this scheme were submitted to the Defence Committee as well as to the Cabinet. I have the authority of my right hon. friend for stating that they were submitted to the Defence Committee before being placed before the Cabinet. These Estimates were submitted by the right hon. Gentleman to the Defence Committee of the Cabinet after full consultation with the whole of his military advisers. They went up to the Cabinet Committee to be considered as the final requirements of the War Office. The Navy Department do precisely the same thing, and, therefore, the Cabinet Committee has the two proposals before it, and is able to gauge what are the requirements of both. I do not for one moment believe that if the right hon. Gentleman comes down next year, and in the name of the Cabinet asks for a certain number of troops, and declares that he asks for them after the advice, and at the instigation, of the Committee of Defence, that he will be any more believed than he is to-day, when he says that a certain number of men are required.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: I entirely agree with that.

*LORD STANLEY: I doubt whether the House would think any more that the number fixed upon by that Committee is the right number, and hon. Members would still reserve the opinions which they have now expressed that the number asked for is excessive. At the present moment the Secretary of State for War, who has enunciated not his own policy but the policy of the Government, tells you that the number of troops which we must be prepared to send abroad is three Army Corps. You cannot expect that the details of that number can ever possibly be given. That is impossible, and that is what I mean when I say that you must, to a certain extent, take these figures on trust, [and you must believe that a responsible Minister making such a statement is doing so with a full knowledge of his responsibility, and the House should give him credit for not asking for a single man more than his military advisers and the Cabinet think are required for the necessities of the case. On the subject of numbers it may be said that we do not need to send 120,000 men abroad, and that we only need some 30,000 or 40,000. What we have to rely upon is the military experts who advise us in such matters. Hon. Members of this House have not hesitated to draw a comparison between the Intelligence Branch of our Army and that of the German Army.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said that he made rather a detailed comparison, and what he compared was the British Army and Navy Intelligence Departments with that of the German Intelligence Department.

*LORD STANLEY: There is one thing which has never been taken into account in estimating the strength of our Intelligence Department. The great place we want to collect all the intelligence we can is undoubtedly on the Indian frontier. [Cries of "Why?"] Hon. Members cannot have it both ways. You do not want intelligence about all the interior of foreign nations, because you say that our Army cannot be used at all in any such enterprise. In India there must always be a concentration of an enormous amount of interest which must affect at all times the strength of the Army. We have got in India an Intelligence Department which is well organised, and which naturally sends back to us matters which have been sifted and can be dealt with without practically any further inquiry. I may say that in South Africa Colonel Henderson is still employed as Intelligence Officer, and he has with him the full staff of intelligence officers which he himself considers necessary.

LIEUT.-COLONEL GEORGE KEMP asked whether the staff Colonel Henderson had with him in the war were now employed.

LORD STANLEY: When the war is over there is not the same necessity to have the same staff. All of them are not therefore at the present moment employed at the War Office. The House may be perfectly certain that when Intelligence Officers are wanted those who did well in South Africa will be used on every possible occasion. I feel as strongly as anybody can feel that we should have the best Intelligence Officers we can possibly have for the whole of our requirements. But I would quote in respect to this subject some words of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. He was referring to the General Staff, and to what has been called the thinking part of the Army. On that point he made a remark which is just as opposite today as on the day when it was made. The right hon. Gentleman said the task of Continental countries differed fundamentally from that of Great Britain; we had no designs upon our European neighbours; Indian military policy would be settled in India; in small wars the plan of campaign must be governed by the particular circumstances, and he was at a loss to know why this larger branch was needed. I agree with him in some of the deductions he has made, though, at the same time, I entirely disagree with him in not wishing to see this particular branch increased largely—increased above what it was then, and, if necessary, above what it is now. There has appeared in *The Times* a series of most interesting articles. They have been directed against the War Office, and I confess today it seems to me, when the last of them has appeared, that it is almost like parting with an old friend. They are written, according to common report, by a gentleman who is a great personal friend of my own, who I know has studied the whole question of Army reform most deeply; but I must entirely disagree with him as to what, after all, is a fundamental part of his scheme, and that is the retention of the First Army Corps in South Africa. It has been pointed out by hon. Members, and by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition in particular, that it will be difficult, if we keep troops there, to secure the requisite number of recruits. Now I do not think that the question of where the recruits are coming from does influence this matter to any great extent. But I am told by those who are competent to judge that when a man has been two or three years abroad, he then feels home-sickness coming over him, and he feels the time has arrived when he would like to return home. That being so, we should be asking him at the time when he is most desirous to come home from South Africa to re-engage for a period of five years. The hon. Member who moved the Amendment used an admirable phrase when dealing with the question of drafts for India. He said that we were gambling on a sixpence. I hope it is an investment and that it may not be a gamble. I understand his feelings most fully, because I appreciate the view that if by any chance there is a failure to secure the requisite number of men to complete the drafts for India, the whole of that scheme for short service must fall inevitably to the ground. Therefore I would ask Members of this House to dismiss entirely from their minds the idea that we are able at present to entertain the suggestions put forth in that article. But we shall at all events have something by which we can judge. We are at the present moment keeping in South Africa certain troops who ought to be, and I hope may be, before long on the home establishment. We are at present sending out recruits, and we shall be able to judge when the time comes for them to re-engage whether we can rely on their re-engaging in sufficient numbers.

I have only one word more to say, and that is on the subject of the Volunteer force. It has been said that the Volunteer force has been slighted at the War Office. I should deeply regret such a mistake, and I should still more deeply regret that there should be any reason for the suggestion being made. I do not believe that on the part of a single man in that office is there any such intention. The new regulations have been referred to as having created some feeling. Before these regulations were put out they were thoroughly considered; but let us grant, for the sake of argument, that they were not considered by the Volunteers. On the second Committee I served personally myself. On it there were a majority of Volunteer members, and the rules and regulations that were put out were not carried by the War Office members but by the unanimous vote of the Committee. I spoke on this matter to my hon. friend behind me, and also to the hon. and gallant member for the Kilmarnock Burghs, and they told me at the time that they saw no reason why the Volunteer force in the main should not be able to carry out these conditions. We have endeavoured to put them as low as we can, and we have endeavoured to give the Volunteers that amount of training and administration which we consider essential to enable them to comply with that part, and practically that part alone, which refers to the defence of the country in the case of possible invasion. The House tonight will have to decide between the two schemes that have been put forward. It is not only an Amendment for or against a particular Army Corps Scheme. The cleavage is very much greater and deeper than that. It is a cleavage as to whether we shall have our present comparatively large Army or whether we shall have a small Army in the future. These seem to be the two sides of the question. On our side of the question I have endeavoured to the best of my ability to state the reasons why I consider our present system must be maintained. We have, at all events, military experts on our side as to the number required. On the other side you have got the arguments, powerful as they are, of those who have moved, seconded, and supported this Amendment. The question cannot be decided by any vote the House of Commons may take today. It is for the people of the country at large, and they will have to judge, but whether the question be submitted to the House or to the country, I feel absolute confidence as to the result.

*MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) said he found himself in some difficulty as to the course he should take in regard to this Amendment. The arguments which the noble Lord had addressed to the House were very similar to those in the speech made by the Leader of the Opposition. The noble Lord dwelt on the necessity of keeping in this country a considerable standing Army, and of course on that point he was in agreement with the Leader of the Opposition. The Amendment, as it stood on the Paper, asked for a reduction of military expendi ture, and it also drew the attention of the House to the number of men now employed in the Army. He found, or at least he thought he found, a very considerable amount of reason why they should separate the one question from the other. None of the speakers who had supported the Amendment, and who referred to the increase in the Army Estimates, had taken notice of the corresponding increase both of area and population which had occurred in the British Empire since these Estimates began substantially to increase. It was not until the year 1892 or 1893 that there was any very substantial increase in the Army Estimates. Between 1887 and 1892 the Army Estimates had varied from £17,000,000 to £18,000,000. They were dropped in 1898 to £15,000,000. During that same period the British Empire was increased by no less than one-third o the present total area. It went up from 8,000,000 to 12,000,000 square miles, at which it stood at the present moment. It went up in population from about 250,000,000 to very nearly 350,000,000, and amongst the population thus added to the Empire might be found as wild, warlike, fanatical and restless tribes as could be found anywhere on the face of the earth. In this calculation he put aside the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. The new territories cost considerable sums to acquire, and they must cost considerable sums to maintain. We had to police and protect them from their own internal unrest, and we had to guard them from possible external attack. Therefore it could not be said that the problem that presented itself to the War Office at the present moment was precisely in degree and character the same as the problem that presented itself before those expansions took place. In coming to a conclusion on this matter he had endeavoured as well as he could to take those considerations into account.

He hoped he might be permitted to put forward one or two arguments in support of the principle he had laid down. The War Office, which in 1887 was four-twentieths of the total expenditure of the country, was now five-twentieths, in spite of the increase of the area to which he had referred. In 1887 the Admiralty expenditure was three-twentieths, and it was now five-twentieths. In 1887 the education expenditure was one-twentieth, and it was now two-twentieths. There had therefore been a corresponding increase in the other Departments of the public service. The three Departments he had named were keeping pace with the natural increase of the whole Empire.

Although he must say that he regretted the present expenditure of £30,000,000 on the Army, he thought that the process of reducing that expenditure was by no means so simple or easy as some hon. Members appeared to think. The Leader of the Opposition laid down two propositions which were echoed from the Benches opposite—that you must know how many men you require, and how you are to get these men. Now, fortunately for us, practically the whole surface of the world had been absorbed by one Power or another and we were not able to add to the area of our Empire to any considerable extent. Therefore, it was to be hoped that some finality had been reached in increasing our possessions. Some of them had been profitless, a great many had been forced on us by the action of other countries, and some of them had been acquired by our own greed, but the process of absorption was complete. Therefore you could lay down some general proposition as to the number of men and the amount of money required. The military authorities had only got to decide the way in which these were to be supplied.

The right hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean, he knew, would like to proceed on what he called revolutionary lines. He would do away with the linked battalions and a Regular Army for home defence and constitute a special Indian Army. That was indeed revolutionary, and there was a great difference between that scheme and the proposals put before the House by the Secretary for War, which were not of so far reaching a character, but only involved what might be called alterations. He thought the right hon. Baronet would find it very difficult to satisfy any one that the system of linked battalions could be abolished. There must be some system at home for keeping up the supply of men for India, Egypt, and the colonial garrisons. It was idle to come down to the House and propose to sweep away a system without some general idea as to what was to be suggested to take its place. They could not play with the system of the Army and go to the War Office and offer a plan in accordance with the results gained in every campaign. They had done this in 1870, and they wanted to do the same thing in 1900. They could not destroy a system because of some personal experience in a particular war. They must take the consensus of opinion of the military authorities, and fortunately the War Office had had the assistance of the best brains in the Army during the past five years; and it was idle for hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House to say that if an easy, cheap, and practical scheme could have been evolved it ought to have been evolved before now.

Putting aside the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman, and also the question of conscription, which was impossible now, whatever it might have been in 1900, they came to the scheme of the substitution of auxiliaries for the Regular forces. The letters in *The Times*, to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwick, referred the previous night, and which he made the basis of a simple but telling speech, laid down, first of all, that they must transfer the First Army Corps to South Africa, then that the general reliance for the defence of this country should be placed on civilian levies and on an increased Intelligence Department. He would say a few words on each of those propositions. In the first place, if they did get a better training ground in South Africa than possibly in this country, they would obtain a training ground not for infantry but for mounted troops. If a future campaign were to be fought, it would not be in a country like South Africa, but one which was broken and enclosed by ditches and fences, in which not mounted troops but infantry would be required; and, after all, the latter could be trained equally well in Scotland or Ireland as in South Africa. In the next place it was said that a *Corps d'Armée* was required in South Africa. That argument might have been valid two years ago but the focus and arsenal for hostilities being gone now and the country having settled down, the numbers of troops, together with the South African Constabulary, which need be maintained for policing purposes, would not be sufficient for an Army Corps Then, in regard to the vulnerability of England and the Colonies, and the strategic advantages to be gained by sending troops to South Africa, it was admitted that South Africa was not likely to be affected, nor Australia, nor Canada. India would not be attacked by any Power except Russia, and troops could be supplied, he argued, for the defence of India as well from England as from South Africa. India had been described as impregnable, but Russia had already absorbed Northern Persia, and there was no guarantee that she would not also absorb Southern Persia. The moment the latter event took place our frontier in India, with the impregnable fortress of Quetta, would be turned. Therefore strategic mobility was not to be gained by sending an Army Corps to South Africa. The right hon. Baronet referred to the possibility of reliance for the defence of this country on civilian levies, as had been shown in the case of South Africa. Everything was now to be referred to a South African standard. But what was the cause mainly of our victory in South Africa? It was not the existence of organised levies of the people well acquainted with the country, and accustomed to an outdoor life. We succeeded in spite of the very qualities inherent in the Boers. [AN HON. MEMBER: We succeeded because we were ten to one against them.] Yes, but what would have happened when they were ten to one against us, if they had been Regular troops? The Boers, in spite of their natural advantages, failed because of their want of cohesion, of their irresolution and their incapacity to strike after victory. If the Boers, being exceedingly good men, had been properly organised, led by commanders who had been trained in the real school of warfare, they would have driven us from the country before we could have sent reinforcements to South Africa. A considerable trained force was required for the protection of Cape Town and Calcutta, but what would be the effect if there was a raid on London by a continental force? There would be a general uprising of the military spirit throughout the Empire, but they could not afford to run the risk of leaving London to be defended alone by civilian levies.

He would ask the House to consider the strength of the garrisons of this country. Which one of them could be weakened without seriously endangering all? Was it proposed to keep fewer troops in India than 75,000? Was it proposed to keep less than 30,000 troops in South Africa during the next seven or eight years? In Canada there were only one battalion garrison regiment, two companies of Engineers, and two companies of Royal Garrison Artillery. Could they be reduced? In Egypt there were one cavalry regiment, one Royal Artillery battery, one mountain battery and four infantry battalions. Were those garrisons in Canada and Egypt too large, and should they not be increased rather than diminished? In all the colonial stations there were only fourteen companies of Engineers, ten batteries of Field Artillery, twenty companies Royal Garrison Artillery, and eighteen battalions. That was the garrison of the Colonial Empire, and could it be reduced? Some of them were garrisons of inferior troops which the War Office would not dare to put into the field, but which might be of some service behind earthworks. There was one further point to which he wished to refer, and which had been mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwick. The right hon. Gentleman most reasonably and effectually argued for the increase of the Intelligence Department. Had everyone forgotten what was the fate of the Intelligence Department before the war, and of Sir John Ardagh's report which was presented to the military and civil authorities and absolutely disregarded by both? That report told the Government that they could not send infantry to South Africa without an adequate force of cavalry to guard their flanks. It told them the armaments of the Boers and their probable number. It pointed out the weakness of Ladysmith, drew attention to every single defect, and told the Government where the weakness of the British Army was, and where the weakness of the enemy. The Cabinet and the military authorities disregarded that report, and, in the face of that, what was the good of increasing the Intelligence Department. What was the good of having 500 men at the Intelligence Department if the War Office and the Cabinet disregarded their advice and the knowledge they collected? What guarantee had the House of Commons that the civil and military authorities would take notice of the recommendations and advice of the Intelligence Department? What they had to do was not to go on increasing expenditure on Army Corps, but to bring the existing departments up to date. They had got to see that the principal officials in Pall Mall made use of the information they got, and that they should take a real interest in the better administration of the Army. He hoped that nothing he had said would lead anyone to suppose that he was speaking in favour of the Six Army Corps system. It was the most portentous humbug ever laid before the House of Commons. It never had any real existence, and the holes picked in it by the hon. Member for Oldham did not need his brilliant oration, but a little industry, a little common-sense, and a little frankness from the War Office. They never did get from the War Office the same frankness they got from the Admiralty. They ought to have from the War Office an annual statement such as the Admiralty presented.

* Lord STANLEY said, if the hon. Member would permit him, he would answer a question which had been put to him by the hon. Member for Oldham, who asked how the discrepancy between his right hon. friend's speech and the *Army List* could be explained. Three battalions had arrived in England since the *Army List* was published. Four were on their way at the present moment from South Africa, and four barracks would, he hoped, be finished in a very short time, when they would be able to bring four further battalions back from South Africa.

* Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said that if one Army Corps was brought up to its strength, it would weaken the other Army Corps. One of the battalions of the First Army Corps was stationed in Scotland. Were they sure that that was not counted in the Scottish Army Corps?

* Lord STANLEY: Certainly.

*MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said that his confidence in War Office figures, though not in the noble Lord, was somewhat weakened. In the scheme of the Secretary of State for War they had brigadiers without brigades, brigades without brigadiers, batteries without guns, and cavalry without horses. All those defects might have been remedied by careful administration. If they were going to have the First Army Corps ready, as he thought it ought to be ready, to go anywhere and do anything, they ought to concentrate in that First Army Corps all their available units, and not scatter them through various other Army Corps, rendering none of them complete. There had been committees and inquiries into the Medical Department, the Remount Department, and several other departments during the war. They had not been told whether any of the recommendations of the committees with respect to these departments had been carried out. They did not know whether the Remount Department had been improved, or whether it had been brought into touch with the Intelligence Department. There was an air of mystery about the War Office which they wanted to clear up. He did not grudge the War Office every sixpence they spent well and wisely. What he grudged was money taken for the service of the War Office and not frankly and properly accounted for to the House of Commons.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) said the hon. Member (Mr Charles Hobhouse) had given in his very important speech the reasons why he, a member of the opposition, would vote for the Government on the present occasion. He did not know whether the House realised that the Amendment was the Amendment which was moved by the Leader of the Opposition when the scheme was affirmed; but the Leader of the Opposition did not, of course, object in the least to hon. Members on the Government side stealing his thunder. The motion was now supported on the ground of principle, but the Leader of the Opposition supported it on grounds of detail. In moving it on the 13th of May, 1901, he said that the question was a question of detail, though now some of his hon. friends on this side said it was a question of principle He was surprised that the right hon. Baronet the Member for Berwick, whose conspicuous fairness in the House was worthy of praise, stated calmly and deliberately that this particular scheme was rushed upon the House, or rather that the House had not been given time to consider it. That was not an accurate statement. The scheme was produced on the 8th of March, 1901, when the House was expected to discuss Army Estimates and the scheme, but instead it plunged immediately into a discussion of the personal grievances of generals who thought they had been hardly treated. Afterwards, several hon. Members, including the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, brought before the Government the importance of obtaining the calm and deliberate opinion of the House of Commons on the scheme, and the Leader of the House took a most unusual course, and said that the Government would give a special opportunity for the purpose.

That was in May, the scheme having been laid before the House in March. When the scheme was brought before the House some hon. Members opposed it. He opposed it tooth and nail, and said wild horses would not make him vote for it. He did not vote for it then, and he assumed the same attitude towards it now. But it was rather a strong order, and it was inconsistent with the dignity of the House or the business aspect of this question to ask them now, on an Amendment to the Address, to deliberately upset a scheme after it had been before the House for an unusually long period, and had been discussed at great length and had been accepted. He mentioned this in order to justify his own position. He thought for the House of Commons to attempt to upset, on an Amendment to the Address, a scheme which it had deliberately adopted after being challenged by the Leader of the Opposition, after due discussion, to reject it, was not the right way to proceed. If they adopted such a course they would deserve neither the respect of this country, nor the loyalty of the Colonies, nor the respect of the foreign nations. He therefore considered it was his duty not to vote for this Amendment. It was for no Party reason that he did not support it. On questions of British security he acknowledged no

Party ties, and he would never follow a Party in a question of this sort. These were not mere empty words, because, as many hon. Members were aware, he had consistently acted up to what he supposed to be his duty in these matters.

With regard to the subject matter of the Amendment the right hon. Gentleman the the Minister for War had been good enough to allude on the previous day to his (Sir John Colomb's) constant advocacy in this House for developing, increasing and maintaining the striking power of the Army. The right hon. Gentleman, or any other Minister, could always depend on his unhesitating and unswerving support of any policy of that sort. He saw in the speeches supporting the Resolution the dangerous idea that if we only had a Navy strong enough we needed no striking military force at all, and merely a citizen army for the defence of these islands. He protested against that doctrine, and always had, and he would warn those of his hon. friends who had suddenly come over to the "blue water school" not to carry their argument too far, but look a little further into the question. When this scheme was first propounded, the Secretary for War announced a new departure of which he cordially approved. The right hon. Gentleman put in the forefront of his scheme the necessity of the Empire possessing an adequate striking force. That had for some forty years been put in the tail of the hunt, and that was a new departure upon which he immediately congratulated the right hon. Gentleman. His ground of subsequent objection broadly was that when the scheme came to be developed he found that this scheme of an adequate striking force was only words and nothing more. His positive objection to the scheme was that it chalked up in big letters "Striking Force," and that the right hon. Gentleman ran away when he developed it. When fully developed, he found it was not a real but a sham scheme on the old hypothesis, and that the right hon. Gentleman finally mixed up in these Army Corps forces rooted to the soil of this kingdom and that free force which was the striking force — the Regular Army.

It was because he was not going to support the Amendment that he wished to make it plain that he was, then and now, in vehement and violent opposition

to the scheme. He hoped that was pretty clear. The only excuse for bringing this question forward in the shape of an Amendment to the Address, when the House was within measurable distance of a proper opportunity being afforded for its discussion upon the Estimates, was that by the procedure of the House when they came to consider Army policy, in going into Committee or in Committee, they were forbidden to discuss the broad principles in relation to sea-power. He had frequently been called to order for attempting to do so. That being the case, his hon. friends, had they waited for the proper opportunity, could not have made their speeches, and therefore he hoped they would not think he was criticising them unduly hardly though he said that he felt strongly that the House should not, on the occasion of an Amendment to the Address, upset an Army scheme formally approved of only a few months previously. But though this discussion was excusable on that ground, it was inexcusable on others, one of which was the deliberate adoption of the scheme by the House, and another that within the last few months a step of the greatest importance had been taken. He alluded to the Council of Defence. That was a new body the functions of which were to review and bring before the Prime Minister and his colleagues in the Cabinet, who alone must be responsible for the defence of the country, all information. It would bring the War Office, in their presence, to prove its doctrine that sea supremacy was no security; and it had this function valuable above all others, it was to keep records and preserve them. They would have in the future a record kept, and if ever the cowardice and pusillanimity of Ministers plunged this country into a chaos of danger and difficulty, the House of Commons would be able to turn up the records, and would know what Minister to hang. That was the first step towards establishing real Ministerial responsibility.

This particular question, therefore, the influence of the sea power as affecting the military policy, and the question raised as to whether we should have a small, big, or no Regular Army, was a matter which he for one left with full confidence to the Council of Defence. But when Ministers were being asked by hon. Members whether the Council of Defence had considered this matter, he could only assume that hon. Members had no knowledge of what a Council of Imperial Defence really meant. How could a Council of Defence, which was only brought into existence within the last three months, and which had not formulated any machinery, be expected to plunge into this question and deal with it offhand? Its members would be unworthy of the position they held if they did anything of the sort. It was in view of the fact of this Council being appointed that he could not go with those who now wished the House of Commons to upset the deliberate decision at which it had arrived a few months ago. He would remind his hon. friends who had lately come over to the "blue-water school" that, as pointed out by Mr. Thursfield, sea power did not merely mean sea force. It meant a combination of military power and sea force, and when they spoke about sea power, they spoke not merely about ships and sailors, but about the just apportionment of the two services for the purpose of providing for national safety and of meeting our obligations to the Empire. He desired to protest against the reckless use of phrases about a "big fleet" and "a small Army." What was meant by a small Army? The measurement of the army, its strength and composition, could be determined only by the practical and real purposes for which that army was necessary. By a "small army" did hon. Members mean small in proportion to the Empire's needs, or small relatively to continental armies? If the latter, he would agree with them, but if the former, he strongly disagreed with them. The real reason for the Amendment was the fear of hon. Members at having to answer to their constituents for the expenditure upon defence. That was a matter for Members to consider, but, for his part, even though it cost him his seat on the morrow, he would never vote for cutting down the necessary expenditure on defence by a single penny.

Why was he in favour of the maintenance and development of a military force for striking purposes over-sea as a necessary adjunct to the Fleet? The frontier of India had been casually disposed of in a sentence, and with regard to the frontier of Canada, a right hon. Gentleman, who had held and would again hold office, had declared that in contemplating the questions of military necessity, America might be ruled out of account altogether. While expressing in the strongest possible manner his desire that the policy of this country should be so guided as to avoid all possible friction with the United States, and that the two Powers should proceed amicably hand in hand, he could not forget that that country was the arena of the bloodiest, most horrible, and revolting war of the last century, and if a people in their own territory and over their own internal quarrels could carry on such a war, it was asking too much that he should rule them out of account in such a question as this. But having thus lightly disposed of these frontiers, Members proceeded to ask: "What, then, is the use of an Army?" If a state of war prevailed, and England was supreme at sea, what did it mean? It meant the paralysis of the enemy's fleet, that if her war vessels came out of port they would be driven in again. So long as that condition of things prevailed, the freights in British ships and British goods might be comparatively safe, but the enhancement of freights and increased cost would handicap the nation in the markets of the world. Already the margin of profit between importing raw material, manufacturing, and exporting, was so small that there was great difficulty in keeping ahead of other nations, and that margin would disappear if the condition of things he had suggested arose. What were the "blue water school" without an Army then going to do? Were they going to wait to be ruined? Did they think there would not be a furious outburst from all the manufacturing cities, demanding that such a state of things should be terminated? But how would they terminate it if they had no striking power? The matter had been dealt with entirely from the point of view of the passive defence of our own land frontiers. Purely passive defence was never successful defence. But other Powers had over-sea territories. He rejoiced that America and continental Powers were pushing their interests over-sea, because, so long as England maintained her maritime supremacy, every possession over-sea of another Power was a hostage to British peace. He agreed that maritime supremacy in the hands of England was the greatest guarantee of the world's peace, but he was not so sure it was such a guarantee of peace if there was no military power immediately available behind the fleet to cause other nations to hesitate to quarrel with us. Such a position contemplated by his hon. friends would ruin our commerce and trade. The House ought not, therefore, to dismiss the question in an offhand way, by saying that because we had a big fleet a Regular Army was not required for striking over-sea.

One other matter had not yet been referred to. All agreed that the real incentive to this Resolution was the question of Imperial expenditure. The House had been told that the expenditure had almost reached breaking strain, that the people could not bear it, and so forth. With that view he agreed. But what was the cause of the expenditure? The energy and enterprise of the people of these islands had created an Empire overspreading the world. Every part of the Empire was profiting by the past and present exdenditure of money, men, and resources of these two islands. If we were to face the future simply as two islands with an Empire on our back, while the Empire itself did not bear its fair share of cost in discharging the duties and the responsibilities, of Empire, he admitted we could not go on. That was the real question, but everybody shirked it. People were frightened to raise the question of colonial contributions. He did not know why they should be. He was confident that if the facts were put strongly and plainly before our fellow countrymen beyond the seas they would have common sense enough to accept the facts, and do their duty like men. The sooner the outlying portions of the Empire understood that this country could not go on for ever bearing the burdens of the Empire almost alone and afford all the security they expectedfree of cost to them the sooner would this bugbear of expenditure be got rid of. In the case of a great war every other country would draw its resources from every corner of its territory, while we should have to rely on the resources of two islands, with merely the sympathy and loyalty of our outlying peoples, unexpressed in organised form. That was not a satisfactory position. Members must make up their minds as to what they were going to do, whether they would run away from their Imperial obligations, because their constituents did not like the expense, or whether they would face them boldly, and say to the peoples of the colonies—

> "These two islands have spent their treasure, and blood in building up your Empire; you are wealthy and prospering now; is it right to expect the mother country alone to go on for ever bearing your burdens?"

He was satisfied that if the case was once put before the colonies by a frank declaration of this House, they would rather contribute their share of the expenditure than allow the British Empire to go down.

*SIR J. DICKSON POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham) said the hon. and gallant Member for Yarmouth advocated a large Army and a striking Army.

SIR JOHN COLOMB: I never said a large army, but one large enough for our needs.

*SIR J. DICKSON POYNDER said that during the Napoleonic wars the reason they were able to contend satisfactorily against the great continental system under Napoleon was that our fleets commanded the seas and we succeeded for a number of years in blockading all the French ports, although Napoleon had nearly a quarter of a million troops ready to invade this country. His hon. friend opposite made what might appear to be one of the most potent arguments against the attitude taken up by the mover of this Amendment and those associated with him. He wanted to make it quite clear that they did not contend for a moment that for home defence they should rely wholly and solely upon an auxiliary force. There should always be a small, well-trained Army in this country. A competent general with whom he had spoken agreed in the main with the view that if they had a well-trained auxiliary force in this country, with a small leaven of well-trained Regulars, they would have all that was necessary for the defence of this country. He wished to point out, however, that by setting aside the auxiliary element and pushing forward the regular element they were bound to stifle that patriotism by which, and through which alone they could hope to raise what they wanted from the civilian element of this country. They could not have a better illustration than had been seen in South Africa in the recent war. In South Africa the population was fairly evenly distributed between the Dutch and the English, but the commencement of the war showed that practically the whole of the Dutch went to arms in the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal. The population of the Orange Colony was about 72,000, but within a very short time no less than 18,000 were gathered to arms, and the result was only too well known in regard to what they did. They not merely defended their own country, but they invaded our territory, and held no less than 12,000 of our troops in one place. With regard to Natal, what did they do there to defend their country? Why, out of a population of 68,000, only 3,000 men were drawn to take part in the defence of that colony.

Two years ago, like his hon. friend the Member for Oldham, he ventured to speak in the debate which ensued upon the unfolding of the programme of his right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War. He said then that he thought it was an ill-matured scheme brought forward at an inappropriate time. Although, upon that occasion, he spoke in an apprehensive and critical way, he did not then feel justified in recording his vote against the scheme. The war had now happily concluded, and this scheme had been in operation for some two years; and the time had now come for this House, and the country at large, to take stock of the position, to consider what the scheme was, and what it was doing for the country. Whatever apprehensions he had two years ago had been borne out by experience, and he felt it incumbent upon him to express his rooted objection, both to the principles that underlay this scheme, and the details by which it was made up. In the first place, the right hon. Gentleman's scheme was subversive of Imperial interests; secondly, it was lacking in appreciation of the necessities of the country; in the third place, it showed a disregard of military resources; and in the fourth place, it was imposing a burden of alarming and unnecessary extravagance upon the country. Actuated by that strong conviction, he should not only associate himself with the mover of the Amendment, but he should associate himself with him in the Division Lobby. This debate had been a good thing, for two reasons. In the first place, it afforded an opportunity to the Prime Minister to become fully acquainted with the strong feeling of antagonism amongst Conservatives who sat upon those Benches. In the second place, it gave the Prime Minister an opportunity, which he hoped he would not pass by, to inform the House and the country whether he really meant to adhere to this scheme, or whether he would alter or modify it. He hoped that whatever he said, it would not be interpreted in any shape or form as being an attack upon his right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War, for whom he had the deepest possible regard. All he wished to confine himself to was to attack the scheme solely upon its merits.

He admitted that the right hon. Gentleman had founded this scheme upon what he thought was an imperial basis, but it displayed, in all its essentials, a complete misconception of the Imperial sentiment which now animated this country and the other portions of this Empire. The scheme consisted of six Army Corps, provided in six compact units, all of which were to be drawn from this country. Was the Army required to invade the territories of our continental neighbours? It would be perfectly ridiculous to suppose that we could raise up a force to contend against those great military countries. Was it for home defence? The Secretary of State appeared to him to fail to realise how different were our conditions as a sea Power from those of continental countries which had contiguous frontiers. Of course France and Germany and other countries were obliged to have great Army Corps. They had frontiers every inch of which had to be defended by garrisons. These frontiers were mapped out by the Intelligence Departments, and from the very moment of the declaration of war vast armies would be hurled on to the frontiers to their allotted places. But with Britain, being a sea Power, it was not necessary that we should have these immense armies. Was it proposed to have this army for foreign expeditions? What possible use could it be for us to have a unit the size of an Army Corps for a foreign expedition? Was it likely to be required as one unit, because the whole basis of the argument as he understood it was—these bodies were to be trained and equipped as one unit, with a general and staff, and were to be ready to move as such? He wondered if the right hon. Gentleman had arranged with the Admiralty to ear-mark the ships which were to take out these troops. The scheme presupposed that in the event of war in these far off territories, wherever they might be, these Army Corps would be sent out simultaneously as one unit. Everyone knew that complications on the Indian frontier or in China would not take place in a day. There would be a gradual threatening for many months, and during these months it might be hoped the Government would be gradually concentrating troops on the spot, so that by the time the war took place there would be a large body of troops out there. When the war was over this large body could not possibly be removed immediately. They would be taken away gradually. On the first outbreak of war there would be a complete obliteration of the Army Corps system.

The Army Corps system seemed to be quite possible for a country with a land frontier where there was an adjacent objective, but it was quite impossible for a country like ours, with a distant and unknown objective. This scheme, unwittingly perhaps, was based on a servile imitation of continental militarism. In the guise of an Imperial scheme, founded on a continental basis, the Secretary of State had really introduced a scheme in the spirit of the Little Englander. The shock of war had revealed the solidarity of the Empire's patriotism; the scheme ignored the teachings of the war; and at the very moment when it had been shown that a large regular Army, drawn solely from this country, was unnecessary paradoxically proposed such an increase. The more actuated the colonies were by patriotism, and the more desirous they were to come to the help of the mother country in the time of emergency, the more the Government proposed to increase the regular Army and overburden the taxpayers of this country by an increased expenditure. The establishment of a great military system on a continental basis was not necessary or suitable for our Empire. Last year, at the time of the Coronation, the colonial Premiers were gathered together at a conference with the responsible ministers, with the view of developing the question of Imperial defence. He had carefully read the Blue book containing an account of the proceedings of the Conference. It seemed to him that the Secretary of State for War might well, on the ground of their patriotism, have appealed to the Premiers to take over the defence of the colonies they represented, in order to relieve the ratepayers of this country of the great burden imposed on them for the maintenance of naval works to defend the shores of the distant colonies. What seemed to him to be the main argument put forward by the Secretary of State for War was one which he did not think any one who understood the sentiment animating our colonial fellow subjects could possibly have proposed with any hope of success. The Secretary of State proposed that a portion of their troops after being trained should be handed over to the control of the War Office at Pall Mall. If there was one thing which the colonials valued it was the principle that there should be no separation between taxation and representation. If they paid for their men we must allow them to have control over them. The opportunity of profiting by the Imperial sentiment of the colonies had not been made the most of.

His second point was that in his judgment the scheme showed a want of appreciation of the necessities of the country. It had been said in the course of the debate that this scheme ignored the fact that we were a maritime Power, that the Navy must be the first line of defence, and that the Army must be planned and organised in subordination to the paramount claims of the Navy. We must have a transcendent and unchallengeable Navy. In view of what had recently been heard, it was possible that our Navy, strong as it was, might not be strong enough. It was our bounden duty to increase that Navy to whatever extent might be necessary. He was very pleased to hear the statement of the First Lord of the Treasury that the Council of Defence was to be brought to life again, and was to undertake the co-ordination of the two services. He had no hesitation in bringing a grave charge against the Government for not having brought this Council of Defence to life many years ago. He came now to his third charge, viz., that the scheme had an utter disregard of our military resources. Even supposing that our national necessities required a great Army, which, he thought, was not the case as he had amply shown, he contended that the inherent conditions of our national life rendered it impossible. The plan was too big for the site; the cost was too much for the country; it demanded more troops than the country could produce in normal times. This scheme must always be a grossly extravagant sham and an entire make-believe.

What had the Secretary of State for War done to bolster up his scheme? The right hon. Gentleman had increased the pay of the whole of the Army—a matter which they need not, in itself, at all deplore; he had had to resort to a reduction of the standard of the men enlisted, although they had been told the previous day by the right hon. Gentleman that he had succeeded in restoring the standard again which had been very considerably reduced from what it used to be. And the right hon. Gentleman had also reduced the time of service. It was said that the recruiting during the past year had been very satisfactory, that 51,000 recruits had joined the colours. He always looked with a certain amount of scepticism on official figures. Without impugning for a moment the accuracy of the Secretary of State for War, he would just like, if the right hon. Gentleman, in order to remove that scepticism, would issue an order from the War Office to parade these 51,000 recruits in the Palace Yard. They would then be able to see them for themselves, and what sort of recruits they were; while he was certain it would add immensely to the success of the proceeding if his right hon. friend would once more don his uniform and put himself at their head. How many of these 51,000 recruits had since left the Army, and how many had been discarded as inefficient? These were very interesting points for the House of Commons to know. He said this with all the more force because he happened to know that at one period the minimum standard for cavalry had been reduced to 5 ft. 2 ins. That seemed to him almost unbelievable, but the fact remained that so low had the standard been that many men had joined the ranks who were physically, mentally, and morally unfit for service. He should like to know how many of these men were included in the 51,000 mentioned by the Secretary for War. Last year they voted on the Estimates an establishment for the Regular Army of 219,700 at a cost of £29,310,000; but now the Secretary for War told them that they had not 219,700 but 271,000 men. Therefore 271,000 men either exceeded the normal establishment as voted in the Estimates by 50,000, or included the additional numbers enlisted temporarily for the war, to be afterwards disbanded.

MR. BRODRICK said that his hon. friend was under confusion as to the figures. The previous night he had taken the whole number of men for this country and for India, which made a total of 271,000. Last year everything had been complicated by the fact that the Reserves, having been called up, were on the establishment, whereas this year, their services having been withdrawn, they were not on the establishment.

MR. BECKETT asked if the whole home establishment had therefore been exceeded by 50,000 men.

MR. BRODRICK: No, it was 12,000 above the strength.

*SIR J. DICKSON-POYNDER said he would not press that point further. He would now turn to the third head of his argument against the scheme of the Secretary for War. What he contended was that they could not get the recruits in a normal year unless they had difficulties in the labour market, which unfortunately they had had during the last four or five months. Looking to this country from the point of view of its commercial ascendency—and without that they could not hope the country would maintain its position—they would be unable to obtain a large number of recruits without dislocating the labour market. The result would be that the pay must go on increasing, and if the pay of the Army was increased, so must the pay of the Navy be inevitably increased. It had been held out two years ago that whatever might be said against the Army Corps Scheme, one thing was certain, that there would be decentralisation in different districts, and that the over-congested War Office would be relieved of a great mass of work. He did not believe that that had taken place, but that the congestion and confusion in the War Office were now greater than before the scheme was introduced. He had seen an example of this recently on his journey from India. A young officer, whom he met on the voyage, had told him that he had served for three years in South Africa, and then had been invalided home. His regiment was at Hong-Kong, and being anxious to avoid going out there he applied to his commanding officer to be transferred to the depôt of his regiment at home. He also wrote direct to the War Office. The commanding officer recommended his transfer to the depôt, but the War Office replied that another officer had already been recommended, and that he must rejoin his regiment. He and his wife, therefore, started off at once for Hong-Kong, where his commanding officer informed him that he had recommended his transfer to the depôt, but that he could not allow him to go back to England now that he had rejoined his regiment. So this young officer wired home to the War Office asking for information, when he immediately received a telegram that Captain So-and-So was to return with all speed to the depôt. All this had been done at a cost to the nation of £450. There was no doubt that nearly every Member interested in military matters could give similar instances as to the confusion which reigned at the War Office.

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till the Evening Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

ARMY ORGANISATION.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment [23rd February] to Main Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth.

"*Most Gracious Sovereign*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr Gretton.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But we humbly regret that the organisation of the land forces is unsuited to the needs of the Empire, and that no proportionate gain in strength and efficiency has resulted from the recent increases in military expenditure."—(*Mr. Beckett.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added.'

*SIR J. DICKSON-POYNDER, continuing his speech, said, before the Adjournment of the House he was trying to point out, on the question of these Army Corps having been instituted in this country with the view of obtaining decentralisation, that it appeared to him the confusion at the War Office was more confounded than it was before. The selection of the Army Corps districts was unfortunate, and the authorities had been particularly unhappy in the selection of the Army Corps centre, with regard to the Salisbury Army Corps. That district contained all the southern counties of England from Dover to Plymouth, and took in the whole of the important coast-line between those two towns, yet the centre selected for that district was Salisbury Plain. If the Secretary of State for War before he devised that centre had studied "Bradshaw," he would have found he could not have selected a worse place for a centre than Salisbury Plain. It was most difficult of access, and Army Corps centres to be of any use at all must be in the most accessible position of the district. Salisbury Plain was connected with all the many towns of the district by branch lines only, and was most inaccessible. He could conceive no worse place for a general who wished for immediate orders or immediate sanction to any action he was taking. Beyond that there was another question with regard to Salisbury Plain. A few years ago the Government, with the full sanction of the House of Commons, purchased Salisbury Plain in order to obtain an available training ground for all the troops in the South of England. The war had shown more than anything else how necessary it was to have some training ground where troops might be trained adequately in extended order. The House of Commons willingly consented to the purchase of Salisbury Plain as the most fitting ground for that purpose, but what had happened? In order to comply with this Army Corps plan, the Secretary of State for War had converted this grand manœuvring ground into a monastic garrison. It seemed to him that nothing would put a premium on discouraging recruits and encouragment towards desertion so much as placing this garrison in this most unattractive spot; a spot invaluable for training purposes. He had, he hoped, shown the House that this scheme, appeared to be one not suited to the requirements of this country, and one which was bound to create much greater expense in the future. If the scheme was realised according to the ideas of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, it would not only result in the sum of money which the country was now asked to pay, but a very much larger sum in the future. The right hon. Gentleman now asked for £30,000,000, but when these Army Corps were filled up, he would have to ask for more money for barracks. That was utterly out of proportion to the requirements of the country in relation to the other service.

We had, as had been shown by the First Lord of the Admiraly in 1900, a sea-borne traffic of £1,200,000,000. These Army Corps were not going to preserve and maintain that great trade; it was to the Navy alone that we could look for that, and it must strike every one that this inflated and excessive expenditure for this scheme was totally out of proportion to the needs of the State. Those who asked for these reforms were not those who desired to do away with the Army, but those who believed in a small, well-trained Regular Army ready to go out at a moment's notice. The garrisons must, of course, be kept properly manned in our dependencies and India, and in order to keep up a proper establishment the number of recruits must be kept up. The day had come, he thought, when the linked battalion system would have to be abandoned and a system of depôts established for the maintenance of our garrisons abroad. For the defence of our own shores we must fall back on our civilian element, and in order to do that we must give every encouragement to the Volunteer forces, an encouragement which, in days gone by, had been conspicuous by its absence. The Volunteer force could not be encouraged too much, and should be adapted to the professional life of the nation. What would comply with the requirements of one locality would not do for another, and therefore the conditions should be made as elastic as possible, and every facility given for the work of training. The War Office must not remain the over-centralised office it was at present, and the Army must not be blind to the aspirations of the civilian community. The country at the present time was quite ready to accept the principle that the young manhood of the nation should prepare and train itself for service in times of national emergency, and he would like to see the Government introduce some system of physical training into the school curriculum which would be of the greatest possible use in the future.

He appealed to the Government to utilise as far as possible the local authorities of this country, who were becoming far more important in their own districts than before, and who were composed of the most influential men. These local authorities might be made use of in innumerable ways to great advantage so far as the defence of this country was concerned. These authorities now possessed a register of the whole of the district, and it would be quite possible in that register to include the physique and occupation and previous character of every man in the district, and if the local authority were asked to place upon its body the military representative of the district in a very short time there would be an influence brought to bear on it which would be invaluable to the service. The mayor and corporation of a district had just as much at heart the defence of the country as the military itself, and that fact should be emphasised in both branches of the service. He did not attempt to indicate a scheme, but only a line of principle contrary to the principle under which this scheme was propounded. All he tried to indicate was that this principle was better than the principle governing this system of Army Corps on the Marconi principle, for that was all it was. Under it we had useless staffs, which were highly paid and had nothing to do, depleted regiments and empty battalions. What we wanted was a small efficient Army, well trained, ready to be sent out at a moment's notice; our garrisons abroad to be well maintained; and a large force of citizens at home well trained to defend our shores and quite ready to take part in any large operations should any come about. His action in voting against the Government was governed by the belief that in so doing he was doing his best to induce the Government to abandon a scheme of Army Reform not conceived in the best interests of the country, and to adopt one which in the future would be of incalculable value to the Empire; and he should continue in his opposition until the present scheme was abandoned.

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) considered this to be the most extraordinary debate that had taken place in this House for some years. In his experience the general burden of all criticisms of the past with regard to the War Office had been that we did not possess a sufficiently large Army, we had not sufficient men, guns, organisation, horses in fact, that we could not put into the field in foreign countries more than a limited number. Hon. Members who had been in the House for any length of time would remember that that was the whole criticism directed against the War Office in times gone by. The War Office, more sanguine, said they could always put two Army Corps into the field. Then came the war in South Africa, and they succeeded in sending more men than anyone thought possible. They did not, however, send enough. The hon. Member for Oldham, in one of the articles he wrote whilst acting as a correspondent in South Africa, stated that half-a-million men were required to finish the war; now the hon. Member came to the House and asked the Government not to increase, but to decrease, the numbers in the Army. After all these years a new school of criticism had arisen, which demanded that the Army should be decreased and the auxilia y forces increased. That was not the only extraordinary change that was suggested. It had been said over and over again that our Army was so arranged that there was no organisation; that there were scattered units all over the country, and no connecting link, no regular staff; that when the war broke out masses of men, horses, and military stores had to be gathered together and a staff improvised which had never worked together before, and consequently did not work well then. The Secretary of State, two years ago, brought in a scheme which got rid of that want of system. Army Corps did not mean a great increase in the Army, but that a regular system of organisation should obtain; that the troops to be utilised in time of war, and everything necessary for them, should be collected in times of peace; and that the officers who would command them in time of war should have the training of them in times of peace.

The new school of criticism first of all said the Army was too large, and secondly, that this scheme of organisation was useless and costly. He felt considerable disappointment when he listened to these criticisms. He thought the old critics were right; that the Army was not sufficiently large or sufficiently organised; and when a Minister attempted to remedy these defects, then this new school of what might be called irregular critics arose against him. The hon. Member for Oldham had said that the Army Corps system was a failure in practice and unsound in theory. The hon. Member was very severe in his criticism upon what he called the failure in practice of this Army Corps Scheme, but in his speech he had quite overlooked the very short time which the Secretary of State had had at his disposal to work out this scheme. It was not yet two years since the scheme was introduced, and for the first fifteen months of that time the war was raging, and it was impossible to take steps to set the scheme in operation. There was no reason why plans should not be laid to carry out the scheme as soon as troops were available, and now that troops were becoming available, he trusted the scheme would be successful. The hon. Member for Oldham made great fun of the fact that of the Militia Reserve of 50,000 men which we were to have under the scheme we had not one, but the Act which enabled that Reserve to be created only passed into law last December, and then a serious attempt was made to stop its passage by the very critics who had spoken upon this Motion. The hon. Member further said that the scheme of new Militia bounties had laid a great burden on the country, and only yielded 2,000 extra Militia recruits, but the recruiting had been falling for many years and this was a great improvement. With regard to the Yeomanry, the hon. Member said that of the 35,000 Yeomanry we were to have we had only 23,000, but even then that was 10,000 in excess of what we had before. In less than two years the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State had more than doubled the numbers of the Yeomanry, and was justified in taking credit for it. Lastly, with regard to the Volunteers, the hon. Member stated that under the scheme his right hon. friend proposed to have 250,000 Volunteers, and inasmuch as there were 280,000 before, his right hon. friend had nearly got down to his limit. What we wanted in the Volunteers was not enormous numbers but a better standard of efficiency. Some corps were splendidly efficient and some were not so good, and it was infinitely better to have a smaller number of Volunteers with a high standard of efficiency than immense masses of men with varying standards.

He had therefore shown, he thought, that the scheme of his right hon. friend was not a failure. If it had not succeeded in every detail, allowance must be made for the difficulties his right hon. friend had to contend with in its introduction. But within two years of its being brought in, and within one year of the end of the war, it was a travesty on our institutions for hon. Gentlemen to come here and try and dig up the whole scheme in favour of some other which they had not disclosed, and which, he believed, did not exist. Turning from the practical side to the theoretical, he noticed that the contention shown on the other side was mainly based on the scheme being too costly. Their argument was that the nation spent a certain amount for its defence; that it could only spend a certain amount; and that, therefore, if the Army took more than the Navy, we must deduct from the Army and give to the Navy. Surely the only sound principle was that both the Army and Navy must be kept up to such a state of efficiency and strength as was necessary for the due defence of the country. The only way to do this was to proceed upon a perfectly sound basis. It was an unsound basis to consider only the Navy, for they had got to take both forces and see what was necessary in the case of each. They had not got to take both forces together, but separately. When they had done this, then the nation must find the money, even if the sum was larger than they were spending at the present time. The safety of the State was of supreme importance, and the necessary money must be found. The policy which involved starving one service for the benefit of the other was a perfectly unsound one, and he was astonished to hear it advocated in that House. Having advocated the reduction of the cost of the Army in order to have more money to spend upon the Navy, his hon. friends had proceeded to state that the provision made by the Secretary of State for War was altogether too large, and that it was an imitation of the Continental system. Was an Army of three Army Corps too large? [AN HON. MEMBER: Six Army Corps.] No, not six, because three of them were composed almost entirely of auxiliaries. Did hon. Members say that this force of three Army Corps was altogether too large? If the Navy was smashed and their main fleet destroyed, neither their Regulars nor irregulars would be of the slightest use. [AN HON. MEMBER: We should surrender.] They would not surrender, but they would soon be starved, for they could not survive the destruction of their fleet, which meant that the command of the seas would pass from them. The argument of trusting to the Navy was not so much an argument against reducing the Regular forces as reducing their large body of irregulars. Putting aside entirely the question of home defence and what troops were required in case of invasion, and taking account of what they would require for the purpose of foreign service, he asked were three Army Corps too many? [Cries of "Yes."] He said emphatically "No." Three Army Corps were not too many in the case of the South African War.

Hon. Members might say there was no possibility of ever having to send such a large force abroad again. Of course they never expected ever having to send such a large force to South Africa. Some hon. Members had stated that a war with America was unthinkable. He hoped it was, but supposing the American people were to attack Canada in a fit of Jingoism, and supposing the Canadians appealed to us for help. Surely they must be prepared for such an emergency as that. [An HON. MEMBER: What would be the good of three Army Corps then?] Well, three would be better than none at all. The natural result of having an Empire was that they must be prepared to fight, if necessary, in any quarter of the world, and he could not see that three Army Corps was an excessive amount to form an Army for such a purpose, and this was the very least they ought to have. Hon. Gentlemen appeared to think that for the purpose of sending troops abroad they could get rid of Regulars and trust to auxiliaries. The hon. Member for Oldham said in the country that the true and only policy was to strengthen the Volunteers at the expense of the Regular Army. He admitted that the Volunteers, the Militia, and the Yeomanry had done good work in South Africa, but did hon. Members think that the work done by auxiliary forces in South Africa would not have been better done by a sufficient number of Regular forces? Did anyone contend that the second batch of Imperial Yeomanry did as good work as an equal batch of Regular cavalry would have done? To diminish the Regular troops and substitute for them irregulars was a most dangerous policy. In the case of the Militia and Volunteers there had been the very greatest difficulty in obtaining a sufficient number of officers. [An HON. MEMBER: Why?] He did not know why, but he was merely stating the fact. If they trusted more to auxiliary forces, were they going to again send out masses of men with insufficient officers? The Militia had done excellent service, but what was their difficulty? Why, officers. Not only was the Militia short of officers, but the bulk of the Militia officers were young men who joined in order to pass into the Regular forces. What was the result at the outbreak of the war? To take his own battalion, they went out with a full complement of officers, and before they had been at Malta long their officers were taken away in order to join the Regular forces. To endeavour to substitute auxiliaries for Regulars, without entirely changing the system whereby the auxiliary forces were officered, would be a most dangerous thing to undertake.

There was the further question of whether auxiliary forces could stand the strain of a prolonged campaign—he did not mean either physically or morally, but he alluded to other matters which they had to attend to at home. When some of the Yeomanry had been out twelve months, hon. Members knew that demands were made in that House that they should be brought home and others sent out in their place. Surely it did not strengthen Lord Kitchener's hands to have a large number of trained soldiers taken away and others who were untrained sent out to take their place. He ventured, therefore, to think that it was a very strange and novel doctrine that they should reduce their Regular forces and substitute auxiliary forces. He did not wish to depreciate the value of the auxiliaries. On the contrary, he valued them very highly, and he wished to point out that one of the best things in the scheme of the Secretary of State for War was that he was the first War Minister that had really paid any attention to the auxiliary forces. Was the right hon. Gentleman not to have any credit for that, and for organising the Yeomanry and getting rid of that sham of the old Militia Reserve, and substituting a real Reserve of Militia? And yet these things were all part of the scheme which hon. Members had condemned. Because the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman assisted the auxiliary forces, and for the first time established some sort of system; because it increased the number of Regulars; and finally because it tackled the question of recruiting, and did something to solve that question, he thought the scheme ought to have a fair trial. Although he did not always support the Government, he would support them that night with the greatest confidence, feeling that, at all events on this occasion, they had endeavoured to meet the greatest difficulties, and they had tackled courageously and fearlessly a most difficult problem. He believed, if they allowed this system to develop, as it was developing at the present time, they would at least get an efficient Army. For these reasons he would give his vote against the Amendment and in favour of the Government.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire) said he could not join in the approval which the hon. Member who had just sat down had showered upon the doings of the Secretary of State for War. In this scheme very little regard had been shown for that long-suffering person, the taxpayer. In no part of his duty had the Secretary of State for War laid himself so open to censure as in his position as a civilian Secretary of State standing against the interests of the taxpayer. The right hon. Gentleman was an elected Minister, and a member of the House of Commons, and his responsibility was directly to the people of this country and to their pockets, and if he might suggest it—and he did so with the greatest respect—he thought the right hon. Gentleman had made a great mistake in endeavouring too much to popularise the Army. He recollected a phrase which the right hon. Gentleman used when he characterised himself as being "laagered round with civilians." And it struck him that this meant, from the point of view of Parliamentary control and the expenditure of the country, that by appointing a military head of the civilian department of the War Office, and other things that had happened of a like kind, the Secretary of State for War had so much weakened the guarantee they were entitled to claim from him in regard to economy. This was an old story, and the country went through it after the Napoleonic war, and the Duke of Wellington and other authorities could be quoted to show that the civilian sphere and the military sphere should be kept absolutely distinct, that one should not interfere with the other, and that only by that method of administration could they succeed in obtaining that strong Parliamentary and Administrative control which alone was a guarantee of economy. The blame which had been showered upon the Secretary of State had not been confined to him, and criticism had been directed at the War Office, by which, he supposed, was meant the Headquarters system of organising the Army. The War Office could not mean simply the officials at the War Office, because no praise was too high for the efforts they used during the late war to provide for the requirements of the Army in the field.

The Government themselves were largely responsible for much of the blame which had been directed at the War Office during the last two or three years. The Secretary of State told them last night that a few years ago, if anybody asked what the requirements of the Army were in regard to foreign service, anyone would have said that to send 70,000 or 80,000 men abroad would be quite sufficient. In South Africa the Government undertook a war which involved the employment of three, or four, or five times that number of troops. Naturally there was a breakdown in the Hospital and the Remount Departments, and consequently the Government were themselves to blame for much of the criticism which had been directed to the War Office. But the Government had never admitted, what was the real truth, that they had undertaken the war in South Africa with a machine admittedly incapable of a sufficient output of troops to carry out so vast an undertaking. The Government were directly responsible for this, and it was a tremendous tribute to the system that it did so well as it undoubtedly did. With regard to the Army Corps Scheme, the Government and their supporters would share the responsibility. During the General Election of 1900, the main issues were two—the settlement in South Africa and Army Reform. In this matter the Government were too ambitious. The hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just sat down said that the criticism passed upon this scheme was too premature. No one could have listened to the debate of the last few days without being convinced that it was not the criticism which was premature, but the scheme. Decentralisation was a very good thing, but it was very costly to start their Army Corps in times of peace on a war footing. It was very costly, and all the advantages of the Army Corps system could have been introduced perfectly easily and applied to our former system of distribution of troops in this country. The Government should not have yielded to the clamour of the moment, and brought forward an ambitious scheme which was entirely inapplicable to the needs of the country. He agreed that the moment of introducing this scheme was inopportune, and that the methods adopted were unsuited to the wants of this country.

He rejoiced to think that though there had not been much expression of it in the House of Commons, the country was now beginning to look at the Bill. Comparisons had been made with the Navy. He would not enter into the differences which prevailed as to what proportion Navy expenditure should bear to Army expenditure, for he held that each service should be judged on its merits. But if they were to avoid excessive expenditure they must be more cautious in committing themselves to new expenditure. The Secretary for War had claimed that, after all, his scheme only involved an addition to a former addition, while it would add 5,000 troops. But that involved an outlay of £300,000 a year, apart from the provision of barracks. If they looked after small things, great things might be trusted to look after themselves. Everyone who had had anything to do with a constituency in which troops were quartered, or in which there was a dockyard or other Government establishment, knew perfectly well how vehement the opposition was to any reduction of the establishment, especially when it involved hardship or want of employment among the men working there. The fact was, that once we had put our neck in a collar of that kind it was extremely difficult to withdraw it. If this Government were to make a new departure to-morrow, it would be years before the effect of any economical arrangement could be seen, or before it made any deep impression on the Estimates of the country. They were advised to change their system, but he must dissociate himself entirely from that view if it involved the abandonment of the linked battalion system. He differed from the hon. and gallant Gentleman who last spoke in his view that our Army system was devised and maintained for the purpose of sending expeditionary forces abroad. That was not the object of their system at all, although it was a heresy which was very widely spread. In *The Times* of that morning he found it stated—

> "The whole scheme is, in fact, based upon the notion that we must keep up a large and costly Army to defend the soil of this country, and then make it as suitable as we can for defending the Empire upon occasion. The opposite view is that we need an Army for the defence of the Empire, trained for modern war as no Army can be in this crowded country, and that, incidentally, we shall always have enough of that Army at home for all the domestic purposes for which Regular troops will be required."

The latter was exactly a description of what our present system was; it was, shortly, a system created and maintained in order to provide our necessary foreign garrisons, and that was the standpoint from which he ventured to criticise it. They were told that they must rely upon voluntary service. But the hon. Member for Oldham had reminded them that this country detested drill, while the hon. Baronet the Member for the Chippenham Division had said that the right hon. Gentleman, in not relying on the Volunteers, was stifling patriotism. In all endeavours to utilise and employ to the fullest extent the auxiliary forces of this country he was in the most hearty agreement, for, to his mind, the training of the Volunteer and Militia forces would enable them to cope with the difficulty of providing foreign garrisons. There was an obligation upon this country to provide garrisons for India, for our coaling-stations, for Egypt, and for South Africa, and it was the necessities of that obligation that measured the amount of the burden placed on the taxpayers of the country by the present establishment of our Regular Army. We had seen their system tested; indeed no system had ever been put to such a test as the present system of the linked battalions had been put to in the course of the South African War during the last three years. It was introduced against military opinion, it was the subject of the most severe criticism, and it was no exaggeration to say that in the elasticity which it showed, in the number of the trained citizens which it provided for us in South Africa, and in its working, the system surpassed all expectations.

He remembered very well that during the General Election a letter from Lord Lansdowne was published, in which his Lordship expressed exactly the same opinion: he said that if it had not been for the Cardwell system, and for certain changes introduced by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling Burghs when Secretary of State for War, we should never have been able to do what we did in South Africa. Now that system relied upon voluntary effort. It was not sufficient to judge by the experience of the last twenty-four months; we all knew the state of military enthusiasm which prevailed among the civilian population of this country, ten, fifteen and twenty years ago. Our circumstances materially differed from those which obtained on the Continent. We had no land frontier with troops of other nations drilling on our borders. There was a sense of security given to us by our insular position, which no amount of preaching was likely to root out of the minds of our people. He doubted very greatly whether we should be wise in relying to a greater extent than we did on voluntary effort. Still he did not think the remedy was to be found in changing the system. He doubted, too, if we should depend too greatly upon the recruiting results of the past year; to suppose that the present rate would be maintained was, he feared, to take too sanguine a view.

There had, it must be remembered, been a recent rise in the pay of soldiers, and the acutest observer must be at a loss to say what the precise effect of that advance would be. We must not strain our military system too much: and certainly it ought not to be abandoned until we had a better one to substitute for it. It had never been proved that there was any other system which would do at a cheaper cost what this one was accomplishing. For himself he was quite open to conviction, but he would like to see any proposal worked out in pounds, shillings and pence before it was substituted for the old one. The previous system had to be abandoned for the reason that it was too costly and because, although the pension list and the sick list involved heavy expenditure, we could not get good men. What were we to do? There was one thing we had done hitherto which we ought equally to do in the future, and not be placed in a position of too great importance. It related to the defence of our self-governing colonies. A suggestion had been thrown out that it would be a good thing to have an Army Corps in South Africa, that it would attract emigrants and be a good advertisement. So it might, but it would also be a very costly advertisement. He could not say what the cost would be, but as the expense of each man in our Army worked out at from £60 to £70 a year, it would be seen that to keep an Army Corps in South Africa would involve a very great outlay. We had other experience to go on. Before our present system was introduced we had troops in many Colonies, and in nearly every place where we had them we had wars which had to be paid for by the Exchequer. There were the several Kaffir wars, and there were the wars in New Zealand, and judging by past experience in regard to our self-governing Colonies, we could not insist too strongly that self-government should carry with it the duty of self-defence, and that in the interests of economy and in the interests of the taxpayers of this country our responsibilities should be kept within limits. Twenty years ago there was not a leading Minister or Statesmen on either side of the House or in the country who did not declare that our Imperial responsibilities were large enough, and that we had territory enough to defend. In South Africa alone, since that time, we had added 1,250,000 square miles to our territory, to say nothing of what had been added in West and East Africa and in other quarters of the globe. A result of this war had been a further addition to our territory and responsibilities, and if our responsibilities were to continue to increase at the present ratio, the House and the country would never be able to keep the current expenditure within bounds. If we were to have any regard for economy, the House must retain its control over the expenditure on the naval and military services, and although the phrase as to the control of the Treasury in the interests of the taxpayers was frequently used, there would be no real economy secured in regard to the Army and the Navy until the House itself was prepared to stand up for the rights of the taxpayers, and to take upon itself, through the Government for the time being, the full responsibility, unshared by any expert advice at all, for all expenditure on the defensive services.

LORD ALWYNE COMPTON (Bedfordshire, Biggleswade) said he was one of those who rejoiced that at last there was a clear and definite issue raised as to what ought to be the magnitude of our land forces, and whether we were to recognise the obligations of the Empire or to run our Empire on the cheap. He had always longed for the moment to come when they could once and for all determine what should be the strength of the land forces of this country, and he confessed that he felt a certain amount of excitement when the Amendment under debate was put down on the Paper. He came down to the House with a fairly open mind, anxious to hear what the critics had to say and what charges were to be brought against the scheme already propounded by the Secretary of State for War. With regard to the speeches of the mover and seconder, and of those who supported them, he thought he might say, with all due respect, that they displayed what he might call a certain amount of shyness in grappling at close quarters with the real definite question of what the magnitude of our land forces should be. He might, perhaps, make an exception in the case of the hon. Member for Oldham, who did tackle the subject most boldly. But even he shared, with the others, what seemed to be a fundamentally defective conception of what the real requirements of the Army ought to be in that respect.

They had listened to some speeches also from the Opposition Benches, to speeches by the Leader of the Opposition and those who sat behind him. And after listening most attentively to them he was struck by the fact that, in substance, the speakers on that side seemed to agree with the principle upon which the present scheme had been founded, although finally they said they regretted they must vote for the Amendment. Indeed, the only criticism he could discover in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs was his criticism against the Secretary of State for War that he had not shown sufficient humour in the conception of his plan. He hardly knew how to interpret that criticism; he would have thought that a scheme of Army organisation would require to be approached with a feeling of deep seriousness, or were they to take it that in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the scheme need not be looked upon from a serious point of view. Possibly that was not a surprising suggestion from one who was a Member of a Ministry which came to grief because it failed to keep sufficient gunpowder in hand for the needs of the Army. This question of Army reform was surely one of the greatest problems which the country could be called upon to solve. Hitherto many suggestions had been brought forward, but up to the present no satisfactory solution had been discovered. Much had been said in the course of the debate with regard to the Navy and the standard which had been set up as desirable to be maintained. But he would like to point out that the position of the Navy was not analogous to that of the Army. In reference to the Navy the public mind had been impressed to a certain extent with the idea that a given standard was necessary. It seemed to be agreed that the Navy should be of a magnitude equal to that possessed by the Navies of any other naval Powers combined. That might be an incorrect idea, and to his mind it was somewhat so. But at any rate it was the pivot upon which the discussions had been based, and it was a standard which the public were able to understand. A standard for the Army, however, had never yet been arrived at, and the question they had to ask themselves was how such a standard was to be judged. Was it to be fixed in some proportion to that of the armies of great military Powers, or was it to be judged in some entirely different way. In his humble opinion they must adopt a different method. They could learn no lesson from the way in which Continental nations decided what the strength of their armies should be. There were considerations applicable to them which did not touch us. One of their chief objects was to be able to quickly transform their armies from peace strength to war strength. We had not that consideration to keep in mind, because we had to make provision for small wars which were of annual occurrence. The Secretary of State for War had been bold enough to try and solve the problem, for when he came down to the House two years ago, and propounded his scheme, he used words in introducing it which seemed to embody the spirit by which it was necessary for us to be guided. He said that his proposal was to lay down what was necessary for the country, and then to find the proper resources for the required organisation. He could not understand how hon. Members could take up their present attitude. When the scheme was originally introduced it was received with acclamation, whereas now it was severely criticised. The bedrock of the question was the magnitude of the Empire. What did hon. Members mean by a large army? No military authority would deny that there must be a certain proportion of trained soldiers for the garrisoning of such places as Portsmouth, Plymouth, the Thames, the Tyne, and so forth, on which a raid might be made on the outbreak of war. The Navy occupied a different position to-day than in days gone by. Then our insular position was a source of strength, now it was a source of weakness. Other nations had constructed navies, so that in time of war our Navy would be occupied in protecting our trade routes. That being so, and bearing in mind the duties the Army had to perform, he could not agree with the contention that the proposed Army was a large one. Having supported the scheme on its introduction, he was prepared to support it now, and until the scheme proved to be a failure he would support the Government.

*MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.): The proposition which is before us, taking as it does the form of an Amendment to the Address—very properly, in my judgment, for a subject so urgent and so important demanded the promptest and most comprehensive opportunities of discussion—necessarily involves, according to what I venture to think one of the least rational of our Parliamentary conventions, a vote of censure upon the Government; and it may, therefore, very well be that when we come to the division to-night it may not meet with the acceptance of a majority of the House. It follows, therefore, that on an occasion of this kind the debate is of infinitely greater significance than the division; and no one who has followed this discussion during the two days it has lasted can, I think, fail to have been impressed by the striking, and in my experience almost unprecedented, consensus of opinion from both sides and almost every quarter of the House, not only as regards the defectiveness of the scheme of the Government, but what from a national point of view is of still greater moment, as regards the true lines upon which a well-conceived policy of Imperial defence ought to proceed. No such agreement, I think, would have been possible ten, or perhaps even five, years ago. To have shown that it exists is a service rendered by the hon. Member for Whitby which entitles him to public gratitude. I venture to think myself that this Amendment, and the discussion upon it, will be remembered as a landmark in the history of our administrative policy long after the six Army Corps of the right hon. Gentleman have vanished into the thin air which is their native element. Last night the Secretary of State, whose efforts for raising the material and other conditions of the soldier's life we all heartily acknowledge, rehearsed with some little complacency the improvements in Army administration of which he has been the author. He dwelt, with perhaps not unnatural satisfaction, upon the figures for recruiting for the past twelve months, which, it appears, exceed the record of the best year of which we had previously had experience. He produced and made the most of that wonderful piece of white paper—one of the most confused and confusing documents which it has ever been my fortune to attempt to understand—with the presumed object of proving to, I am afraid, a rather sceptical world that these Army Corps of his, which have been calumniously represented as skeletons and shadows, are really a living and thriving family.

I will not follow the hon. Member for Oldham in his brilliant, but, I must confess, rather pitiless diagnosis of the sad case of these ricketty infants. I prefer to point out to the right hon. Gentleman and the House, because I think it is more relevant to the question raised by the Amendment, that assuming, as I will for the purposes of argument, that all the right hon. Gentleman's figures both as to recruiting and as to the composition and growth of the Army Corps are literally accurate, it does not in the least degree touch, or even approach, the gravamen of the charge which is made in the Amendment against this scheme. I will, for the purpose of argument, make that assumption. I think it is a very charitable and even a very generous assumption, because I rather gathered from the statement I heard from the noble Lord the Financial Secretary to-night, that as regards the first, presumably the best-equipped and most advanced, of these embryonic Army Corps, one battalion, for some reason or other, is still exercising its profession in Scotland, while I think four are either in South Africa or on their way from there. These are all parts of an Army Corps supposed to be permanently located at Aldershot. ["No."] However, Sir, I pass that by. [MINISTERIAL cheers.] I am stating admissions made by the Minister himself, but they are quite sufficient to show that the paper completeness of these Army Corps has very little correspondence with their actual condition. As I was saying, that does not touch the real gravamen of the case. One might almost be justified in saying that if a system is bad in principle, if it rests upon a vicious foundation, the more completely it is carried out, the worse may be expected to be the results. I will take, by way of illustration, the figures which the right hon. Gentleman quoted as regards recruits, and I will assume these figures to be right. I am not impeaching in the least degree the authenticity or the good faith of the statements that have been made. I should think there was an *à priori* probability that there would be a large increase in the number of recruits last year. The pay of the soldier has risen; a year hence it will be raised still further, in the case of soldiers who have served two years by as much as 6d. a day. Moreover, in some places the labour market has been greatly disorganised, and there has been a considerable want of employment. The point I submit to the House is this: When we criticise the right hon. Gentleman's scheme, the question we have to consider is not what is the number of your recruits, but for what purpose are they being recruited—how are you going to use them? Some of them will fill the places of men who have been discharged, time-expired men, and so on; but how and for what purpose are those who represent the permanent addition to the Army going to be employed? Are they going to be trained and paid at the rate of something like £60 per head per annum to do that which could be done as well, or better, by our Volunteers, Yeomanry, and Militia? If so, the increase in the number of recruits, with the additional burden to the public finances, is not a gain, but rather the contrary. Are these men going to be employed to fill up the half-empty *cadres* of some unnecessary and ill-placed Army Corps? We are paying £5,000,000 a year more than we paid six years ago for the expenses, for the most part, of the rank and file of our Army; and the question this debate is intended to raise and, if possible, settle, is this: Are we, as compared with our position five years ago, getting value for that additional expenditure? It is not enough to say that you have got more men; it is not enough to say that they are better trained, better housed, better fed, better equipped; that in fact you have got a more efficient fighting machine, although I agree that if that is so it is so much to the good. There is a preliminary question which has to be answered, and that is, whether and how far these 54,000 additional men whom we have in the Regular Army as compared with the numbers in 1896 or 1897 are really needed for work which only a Regular Army is fitted to perform? Until you have answered that question and satisfied the House and public opinion that they are doing work which could not be as well done by somebody else, it is no use giving us these figures of recruiting.

The right hon. Gentleman claims, and rightly claims, not to be judged by this or that detail, but by the general scope and results of his scheme. He claims that it is a great scheme of Army reform; and in his peroration last night, in which at one moment it seemed to me he assumed rather a pathetic tone, he almost adopted the attitude of a martyr about to be sacrificed by a bigoted and uninstructed public opinion on the altar of some great principle. He will admit, he is bound to admit, that outside the War Office—I do not know what may be the state of opinion inside—his scheme has no champions and, as this debate has I think shown, very few apologists. How does he account for this? The right hon. Gentleman has a very simple hypothesis to account for it. He says that an Army reformer is almost always disparaged and misunderstood by his contemporaries, like one of those unfortunate pioneers or missionaries of truth who have to trust for their vindication to the more equitable judgment of a perhaps very remote posterity. But I am not sure myself that in these matters the present is always wrong and the future always right. Suppose that, with the best intentions in the world, the would-be reformer presents what he calls a reform, but which is not actually a reform, may not the fair and unbiassed opinion of the country be pronounced against it without the supposition that the objections proceed from bigotry, misconception, or prejudice, and still less—and I was rather sorry to hear the suggestion from the right hon. Gentleman—from petty grievances and personal disappointments? Why, anybody who has listened to this debate will see there is no foundation for any suggestion of that kind.

Now, I wish in the very few moments I intrude upon the House — for the ground has been very completely covered during these two nights' debate — to present in the very broadest outline two or three fundamental objections that we take to the right hon. Gentleman's scheme. My first criticism upon it is this. The problem of national defence is a composite problem, in the solution of which both the Navy and the Army are interested, and both are entitled to be heard, and in the solution of which, in a country and in an Empire situated as ours is, the Navy is entitled to the predominant voice. My first complaint against the scheme is that this composite problem of national defence has been approached by His Majesty's Government from one side only, and that the less important side. We know—we heard with gratification the recent announcement of the Prime Minister—that the Cabinet Committee or Council which looks after national defence is to be reinforced, and in some respects to have its composition changed; and what is the purpose of this change? It is, as I understand it, that as between the two great Departments responsible for our national and Imperial defence there shall be a more constant interchange of ideas, and a more complete co-ordination of policy. Does this scheme spring out of such concerted action? Were the naval authorities consulted? Is there any naval authority in the House, or out of it, who can be vouched as an advocate or a supporter of it? We know that only last summer, when the Colonial Conference was assembled, and delegates from the Colonies were asked to consider what contributions they would recommend their constituents to make to the common burden of Imperial defence, two documents were produced, one containing the official view of the War Office, and one that of the Admiralty, and these were totally different, fundamentally divergent one from the other. As the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean has more than once pointed out, if you take the total military and naval expenditure of the Empire—not merely of the United Kingdom, but of the Empire, the expenditure on the Army is something like £50,000,000, and upon the Navy something like £30,000,000—or, in other words, the subsidiary force, the less important force from a national and Imperial point of view is the more expensive, and exacts the larger contribution from the taxpayers in the proportion of five to three. With these facts before us, and when we had in relation to the Colonial Conference these statements as unmistakable proof of the want of contact or co-ordination between these two great Departments, we are entitled to complain that a great scheme of national defence like this should be launched upon the sole authority of the War Office, and without any consultation with or approval from the more important and senior service. How far does that objection go? This scheme assumes that the Regular Army has a certain share—I will not discuss the precise quantity, but many of us think it has an excessive share—in the task of home defence. Now, we should very much like to know the opinion of the Navy and the Admiralty upon that. The hon. and gallant Member for Yarmouth, who is recognised as a great authority on these matters, in the speech he made before the dinner hour, rather sneered at the length he conceived their new faith carried some of the converts to what is called the "blue water school." I do not know how that may be with others, but I hope I do not belong to the extreme "blue water school," if there be one, which suggests that we should get on well enough with the Navy alone without any Army. I doubt if any such school can be found outside a lunatic asylum. You want not only the "blue water," but the "thin red line;" and it is by combining the two by a co-ordinated policy arrived at and agreed upon between the two authorities that you can solve the problem of home defence.

The fact is, that this scheme, presented two years ago, and which we are again asked to approve, was concocted in hot haste in the middle of the war, when many of the lessons of that war were not even taught, much less learned, marked, and digested, and when the War Office had to justify itself, when it had to divert public attention from the past, and had to convince the world that it was animated by a new spirit, and capable of a new departure. It was then this crude and ill-conceived scheme, which, the more it is considered the less it is seen to meet the requirements of the Empire, was launched. But I pass from that to a point which is of still greater and more general importance, and which embodies a still graver objection. We say of this scheme —and I think it has been abundantly demonstrated in the course of this debate— that it either ignores, or at any rate does not take due note of, the governing conditions of the problem of Imperial defence which it is intended or expected to settle. Those conditions are two. The first of them is, that ours is an Empire which for certain obvious physical and economical reasons always has depended, and now depends more than ever, both for defence and offence, upon sea power. And the second condition is this—that for the discharge of the functions, the important functions, the varied functions, but still subsidiary functions, in such an Empire, of what is properly called a Regular Army, we must depend, and must continue to depend, on a force recruited, not by any form of compulsion, but by voluntary enlistment. These are the two governing principles of the problem of Imperial defence. I will not dwell upon the first principle, which has now almost become a commonplace of the day, that in the long run both defence and offence depend on sea power. But once we accept that principle, I agree with the hon. and gallant Member, who said that sea power means a navy having behind it such a degree of military force as would be necessary to make its action effective. There I think we all agree. But once start with the proposition that sea power is the governing factor, and you at once get rid of the notion that it is either necessary or expedient to keep a large and expensive body of regular troops constantly immured in these islands to repel an invasion. The dilemma has been put over and over again, and there is no escape from it. Either you maintain the command of the sea, or you lose the command of the sea. As long as you maintain it, invasion is out of the question; invasion is impossible. But the moment you lose the command of the sea it is not six, it is not sixteen, it is not sixty Army Corps that will save you from collapse, for the House well knows that it is not merely a question of invasion. When the command of the sea, and so long as the command of the sea, passes from our hands into the hands of our enemies, we who look for the means of subsistence and for the materials for our industries from abroad could be starved into submission in less time than it would take to mobilise an army.

I need not say—except that one has to be careful in these matters, it is so easy to be misapprehended or misrepresented—we are all agreed that there may be accidents which would deprive us for the moment temporarily of the command of the seas. There might be that which fills many minds with apprehension, a raid or series of raids on our unprotected seaports. But no one supposes that we should denude the country of a sufficient land force to meet an emergency of that kind. On this point again we join issue with the Government; for here we look more and more to our Volunteers, to our Yeomanry and Militia. It is an ideal you cannot attain in a day, but you ought to make it your ideal that these are the forces to whom should be properly appropriated the task of dealing with home defence. You should, in my opinion, develop this ideal. You should encourage, you should inspire, you should aggrandise, you should magnify—you should give every possible consideration to these forces in order, as far as possible, to fit them for their proper position in any rational scheme of national defence. This is where we take issue, on this particular point, in regard to the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman. We say that under his scheme not only is there a large, but many of us think an excessive, share of this task still assigned to the Regular forces; but that by your organisation you mix them all up, Regular and auxiliary forces, higgledy-piggledy in a confused mass, making it still harder than before to work out a well-organised ideal of home defence.

Well, there is one other point, one other test, to which a scheme of this kind should be subjected. We want, not for home defence—and on this proper stress must be laid—a mobile striking force which can be used for foreign service on those numerous occasions which, in an Empire like ours, periodically recur when we are obliged to send our troops on foreign expeditions. Does the scheme of the Government give us what we want then? It is true it gives us on paper three permanently organised Army Corps intended for that purpose, and for that purpose alone. For my part, I doubt more and more the more I hear the matter discussed whether for this purpose there is any necessity for the large addition made in recent years to our Regular forces. It is said that the war in South Africa has demonstrated that our Army is too small. I do not think that it demonstrates anything of the kind. It has taught us many—a great many—lessons; it has taught us the value of better information. I entirely agree with the hon. Member for Oldham, who said that we might spare the staff of one of these Army Corps which at present do not appear to be in a very advanced stage of development, and devote the money to the better equipment of the Intelligence Department. But while the war has taught us many other lessons, I confess I do not see that there is any evidence to support the contention of the right hon. Gentleman that we are justified in keeping up such an Army as he proposes in view of any of the normal wars in which we may become engaged. I do not see the necessity of cooping up in this country three complete Army Corps ready to be launched at a moment's notice for foreign service; and I do not see the necessity for it for home defence. For these reasons, whether the scheme is looked upon from the point of view of home defence or foreign service, our criticism is—first, this scheme is unsuited to the special requirements of the Empire—that, I think, has been established beyond all cavil in this debate—and, next, that it imposes an unnecessary, and therefore unjustifiable, burden on the taxpayers of the country. Under what circumstances is that burden sought to be imposed? We have just spent £250,000,000 on a great war, and have made an addition to the public debt which it will take the lifetime of a generation to wipe out. The income-tax is higher than it has ever been since the Crimean War. Sugar is taxed; coal is taxed; corn is taxed. You may say that the resources and the credit of the nation have proved equal, and more than equal, to the strain. So they have. But may we not well ask with your late Chancellor of the Exchequer—who was the first to ask it—whether those resources and that credit will continue to be equal to the strain if the military expenditure advances during the next ten years at the some ratio as it has done in the past? Meanwhile, do not let us forget that there are necessary and unavoidable social demands which are increasing day by day. There is not one of those great domestic questions, with the settlement of which most of us agree that our national welfare is bound up—education, housing, provision for old age, and the rest—there is not one of them that will not make year by year new and growing drafts on the Exchequer. National security, I agree, is the first of all our National needs. But to this scheme, framed as I believe it to be on a radically false conception, both of the functions of the Army and the needs of the Empire, imposing, as I believe it does, at a time of great strain and stress a wholly unnecessary and unwarrantable burden on the loaded shoulders of the taxpayers, I, for my part, shall continue to offer, as I have done from the first, an uncompromising opposition.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Mr. Speaker, I avow myself, and have always avowed myself, an admirer of the right hon. Gentleman's speaking, and for many reasons, but for this reason in particular—that he always goes straight to the heart of the controversy which he is engaged in. In this case I think he has not belied the reputation which his previous efforts in this House thoroughly deserve. He has not imitated those sitting on this side, nor has he followed their example in dragging into this controversy small points of administration, small questions arousing prejudice; he has gone straight to what is, after all, the heart of the question—whether we have or have not too large and too costly an Army for the needs and resources of the Empire. I think the right hon. Gentleman has done well. He has intervened in a debate which has had many curious circumstances—a debate in which a vote of censure has been elaborately moved from the side of the House on which the Government sit, which has been seconded from the same side of the House, and which, if the rumours that reach me are correct, is intended to be pressed by those who support it to the furthest lengths which their powers will enable them to go. That is, in my experience, a novelty. Of course, it is quite impossible that in a large Party, or even in a small Party, there should be absolute agreement even upon the great subjects with which this House is concerned. But I do not remember in my personal experience that such a course has been taken, not merely to express a difference of opinion, and to express it with every circumstance which can aggravate that difference of opinion, but to choose a moment for expressing it in which its acceptance by the House would constitute a vote of censure on the Government, of which the Gentlemen who have moved it are, I understand, ardent and faithful supporters. I thank the right hon. Gentleman for really having given only a few cursory sentences to the controversy with regard to the Army Corps. That has filled three-fourths of the remarks of other hon. Members—some serious, some humorous, some humorous which were intended to be serious, some serious which were intended to be humorous—but it has filled three-quarters of the other speeches which I have heard on this Amendment. And yet how small a matter that is compared with the real issue before the House! After all, Army Corps are a method of organising the forces we possess in this island. At the time at my disposal I am not going to argue in detail whether organising the forces in this island by Army Corps, as compared with the plan of leaving them unorganised altogether, which is the alternative—[AN HON. MEMBER: "No."]—if that be thought an extreme statement, I will say, as I wish to be moderate, that the question whether the best way of organising the Army within these shores is by means of Army Corps or by means of districts is a really relatively small and insignificant issue compared with the other issue before the House. For my part, I do not hesitate to say that the decision which the Government arrived at two years ago is a decision to which the Government still adhere. We still think that an organisation for Army Corps has the enormous advantage in time of peace that it facilitates decentralisation, and has the enormous advantage in time of war that if any large bodies of troops are to be sent abroad they can be sent abroad in an organised condition. And if it were worth while to make quotations from expert authorities, I could quote speeches, for example, from so great an authority as the Member for the Forest of Dean, who made bitter complaints of the absence of this very kind of organisation when we were occupied in sending out almost all our Regular forces to South Africa. I do not mean to dwell upon that, because I have more important subjects on which I have to address the House. I only regret that, in the speeches of the hon. Members who have criticised the military policy of the Government this comparatively insignificant detail has figured so largely, and the really important questions have only appeared at the tail-end of their orations. The real question we have to ask ourselves is this—Is the Army which we have provided too large, or is it not? If it be too large, what matter whether it be arranged in Army Corps or not? That is a small matter. If it be too large, surely the House will not occupy two days on a vote of censure on the King's Speech in discussing such a small matter as the particular form of organisation which this Army ought to have.

To the question, therefore, whether we have or have not provided too large an Army, I now proceed to address myself. And let me, in approaching that subject, put aside some points about which we all agree, and some about which there may, perhaps, be only slight diversity. One of the points about which, if we are not all agreed, there is not any great diversity of opinion, is that if we are to have an Army of the size which we have provided, that Army could not probably be brought into existence and organised at any less cost than we are asking the House to furnish. There may be, and probably are, Army reformers listening to me at this moment who think they have a plan to provide the force which my right hon. friend provides at less cost to the Exchequer than he has provided it. But I think, on the whole, I shall carry the House with me when I say the charge against us is not that if we have this large number of men we are paying too much for them, but that we ought not to have so large a number of men. That is the first point which I ask the House to agree with me in putting aside. The second point is incomparably more important, and it relates to the primacy as between the Fleet and the Army, in the whole question not merely of national defence, but of Imperial strategy. Nobody, of course, nowadays is so foolish as to suggest a doubt that in the circumstances of the British Empire the Fleet stands first from every point of view. It stands first as absolutely essential to the defence of our shores; it stands first because it is absolutely essential to the defence of our commerce; it stands first because it is essential for the defence of our Colonies; and it also stands first because it is impossible that any military operations beyond the sea should take place unless we have a Fleet to protect it. And, of course, it is admitted on all hands, and by every person who has given even the most cursory attention to the subject, that the Fleet is the leading element, and the most essential element, in our whole plan of Imperial strategy. But I have heard some Gentlemen—and I am afraid the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down amongst them—arguing from this indisputable premiss that we ought always to spend a great deal more upon our Fleet than we do upon our Army. The argument is really an irrational argument. It does not follow that the expenditure on the Army and on the Fleet must necessarily be proportionate to their relative importance. You might as well say that, as bread is a prime necessity of life, no man ought to spend more on any other part of his household expenditure than he spends upon bread. I hope, therefore, we may hear no more of this fallacy of proportion, of which we have heard so much in some of the speeches of this debate.

Then the third point on which we may approach—I do not say we shall reach—agreement is that it is in the main upon the Volunteer forces, or the citizen forces, of this kingdom that we must depend for our home defence. I entirely agree with the proposition that has been laid down by the right hon. Gentleman with an air of paradox and as if he were endeavouring to impress this thesis on a reluctant Government. It is the very principle on which the Government has proceeded in all their reorganisation. In our view that is the very ground on which we have proceeded. Our view is that, for reasons I shall develop directly, we must have three Army Corps for Imperial work outside these islands; and if you eliminate for the purposes of home defence these three Army Corps, and consider the composition of the three remaining Army Corps, any Gentleman who has read the White Paper will see that the forces in the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Army Corps are really more in the nature of a stiffening and assisting element than in the nature of the main force on which we are relying. Any Gentleman can verify what I am going to say by referring to the Paper; and they will see that, as far as infantry is concerned, the Regulars supply fourteen battalions and the Auxiliaries sixty-one; while of the cavalry five are provided by Regulars and ten by Auxiliaries. Therefore let us all agree that on the citizen and Volunteer forces we depend for national defence. I heard my right hon. friend attacked in the course of the debate for having undervalued, ignored, and snubbed the Volunteer force. I am prepared to show that the Government—I will not say my right hon. friend, because he is a member of the Government who are responsible for and who are sharers in the work he is carrying on—the Government, in my judgment, have shown themselves more anxious, more desirous of making the Auxiliary forces an efficient part of our national defence, and have done more to fulfil that in every respect than any of their predecessors. I am not going into details, I am not going to mention any monetary improvements in the position of the Volunteers in any way, but the purely military reforms which we have carried into effect in the last two years. We have provided the Volunteers with heavy guns of the most advanced pattern, for which they have been asking for years. We have done all we can to improve the position of the Militia, and we have created a great Militia Reserve, for which I think every Gentleman who has spoken on both sides of the House has thanked us. We are doing our best to provide all the training and all the inspection which would make the Volunteer force all it should be; and I think that to contend that, because my right hon. friend has endeavoured by the proposals he has made to raise the efficiency of the Volunteers, he has therefore done otherwise than to deserve well of the Volunteers is, surely, to direct against the Volunteers the greatest insult you can imagine.

I have omitted, perhaps, the greatest reform for which we may claim gratitude—I mean the reconstitution of the Yeomanry—which has had the happiest effect, which has really met with no serious criticism, but has for the first time provided a great body of mounted troops, invaluable should this country be invaded, and invaluable should the force be required elsewhere. I really think that those who say we have undervalued the Volunteers, the citizen elements of the forces of the country, wholly misunderstand the situation. On the contrary, we have paid them the highest compliment we could. We appeal to them as a real force on which we have to depend in case of emergency; and I do not doubt the appeal we have made will find an echo all through the country, and we shall be able, when the bitterness of this immediate controversy is past, to look back upon this period as an epoch in the history of the citizen army of this country, and to get then the increased efficiency from which we and those who come after us will reap infinite benefit.

Having thus dealt with points on which, I think, agreement may be reached, I come now to a point on which we differ. The point made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, the point made, as far as I can discover, by every speaker on this side of the House when he came to the real kernel of the dispute, is the difference between those who accept, and those who do not accept, the Government principles of Army administration. And what is that central difference? The central difference is this: Do we, or do we not, in addition to the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Army Corps, mianly composed of Auxiliaries, and mainly required for home defence—do we, or do we not, require troops equivalent to three additional Army Corps for work outside the shores of these islands? It is on that point—which is the critical point of this debate and the one of real importance when we come to divide to-night — that I would venture to say a word to the House. We have heard a great deal of what the Fleet can do; and the Fleet can do much; but it cannot do everything. All the Fleet can possibly do, as far as I am aware, is to protect these shores, to protect our commerce, to destroy or to contain the fleets of the enemy, and to embarrass the enemy's trade. I believe that this list exhausts the whole of the capacity of a fleet, howsoever big or well-equipped it may be, or howsoever superior to a force that may be brought against it. You cannot bring a war to an end by the Fleet, you cannot even strike a heavy blow at most of the enemies with whom we may conceivably have to deal. I do not develop that thesis, because I really do not think it can be denied; but I am prepared to do so if anyone questions it. Then how are you to supplement the Fleet? Every writer on strategy I have ever heard of, Admiral Mahan, who is a great authority on sea power, and others, have all agreed in telling you that after the command of the sea has been secured, then the Fleet is only useful as making absolutely secure some military operations on a foreign theatre. How are you going to do that with your citizen army? How are you going to do that without these Army Corps of Regular troops? You cannot do it. I think my hon. friend the Member for Oldham said that a Fleet gave you time, and that if you had time you could create, equip, and drill an Army; and that, with time, having equipped and drilled it, that Army would be useful for offensive purposes. Does my hon. friend really think it is business to say that we are to carry on a maritime warfare for one, two, or three years while we are drilling a Regular Army for the purpose of finishing the war?

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: I submit to my right hon. friend that it would be better than not being able to carry on a maritime warfare, and consequently not being able to realise the latent resources that you have.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I thought my hon. friend was going to interrupt me to say that I had misinterpreted him, but he took the opportunity of continuing the debate. He will therefore permit me, perhaps, to complete my argument, which is that to spend one, two, or three years, by means of your Fleet, in developing what he calls our latent resources would, I think, in the opinion of every strategist who has ever written, be a very inconvenient, expensive, and destructive way of carrying on a great war. Very well, then, I hope if I have so far carried the House with me they will admit that here is one most important object which we can only attain by an organised body of Regular troops available for service outside these shores. Let us dismiss therefore these dilemmas constantly put before us such as, "Are you going to use your Army?" "Are you going to land on some foreign shore with 50,000 or 100,000 men?" or "Are you going to fight with some foreign Power which has one, two, or three million armed men at its disposal?" Why, of course you are not going to. But I would remind my hon. friend and the House that that does not exclude the possibilities of offensive action in time of war; and it would be folly to deprive ourselves of the power of exercising such offensive action if the proper time should arise.

But there is a more important object for which the organised body of troops available for service beyond the seas is absolutely necessary, and that is the defence of India. The defence of India has been touched upon by more than one speaker, by my hon. friend the Member for Whitby, who moved the Amendment, and by another hon. Member who spoke late last night, each of them mentioning the possible danger only to deride it. My hon. friend the Member for Whitby has travelled over the Indian frontier, and he tells us that the result of his observation is that the Indian frontier is impregnable. My hon. friend the Member for Plymouth has travelled in Central Asia, and he assures us from his experience and observation that it is impossible, with such means of communication as Russia possesses, for her to concentrate any large body of troops on the Indian frontier. My hon. friend the Member for Whitby thinks the passes leading into India are unassailable. My hon. friend the Member for Plymouth, who has evidently suffered a good deal in the process, says that the Russian lines are so abominably laid that the trains do not go more than six and a half miles an hour, and that the rolling stock is wholly inadequate. And in addition to the opportunities of personal observation which my two hon. friends have had on this very important question, they have each had the good fortune to meet an expert in the course of their travels who has given them valuable information. My hon. friend who travelled in Central Asia met an Indian expert, and my hon. friend who travelled upon the Indian frontier met a Russian expert. And while the Russian expert said that Russia could not invade India if it would, and would not if it could, the Indian expert said that, whether Russia invaded it or not, the forces at present in India were amply sufficient to repel any hostile attack. I think that a war between Russia and Great Britain is to the last degree improbable, and I presume that a war between Germany and Russia is to the last degree improbable. But what would be thought of the German military authorities if they had not, however remote such a contingency, thought out all the military difficulties which it involved, and had not prepared, to the best of their ability, for dealing with it? In the same way, though I regard the contingency as in the highest degree improbable, I cannot of course forget, when

I am required to deal with the strategic and military question, that the frontier of India is the only part of the British Empire where it may be said to be militarily adjacent to a first-class military Power; and it is impossible that we should not therefore consider that as the key of our military position.

And let me say here that, so far as I understand the military problem as presented by the British Empire, it is not the problem of home defence which settles, or ought to settle, the magnitude of the British Army. It is the question of what that Army may be called upon to do in spheres of action far removed from these shores. I am very reluctant to express any difference of opinion with hon. friends of mine who, with a considerable military knowledge which I do not possess, have done what I have never done — namely, visited the important scenes with which we are concerned—and have studied the means of access to the Western frontier of India which Russia may possess, and have studied the character of the passes through which any advance to India must be made. But I am bound to say that I am not aware of a single military authority who has been responsible for giving an opinion upon this question, whether that military authority has been Indian or English, whether he has studied it from the British or from the Oriental point of view, who takes the sanguine and optimistic view of my two hon. friends. I think we have been asked in the course of this debate by more than one speaker how it comes about that the force which presumably the Government six or seven or more years ago thought sufficient for Imperial needs, and, among other things, for the defence of India, is no longer thought sufficient. Events move rapidly in Central Asia, and we have necessarily to consider how far the strategic position of Russia has improved in that time. It has improved year by year, I had almost said month by month, in the character of its communications between those great passes and the points at which, if unhappily, though I believe most improbably, hostilities were to break out, this force would be required. I do not pretend to give a final or considered judgment on this point. It is one full of difficulty—difficulty which I do not wish to minimise—and full of complexity. It is one of the questions which, of course, has been strenuously worked at by the Defence Committee. But I feel myself authorised, I feel myself bound, to go this far to-night—to repeat what I have already said to the House, that, whatever final judgment may be passed by the Committee of Defence upon this great strategic problem, no authority except my two hon. friends and the Russian and the Indian generals has, so far as I know, ever had the courage to say that in the unhappy, the improbable, but, I suppose, in debates of this character we must say the conceivable, case of a war with Russia we should require not merely the force which we have in India at this moment, but a force much beyond what the Government propose to put at the disposal of the Sovereign. Well, Sir, if that be so, what becomes of the central issue, the central argument, the central debate which we are having to-night? It is not a question of this or that Minister. It is not a question of the organisation of the Army Corps. It is a question of the amount of forces which this country requires to do its Imperial work. After this debate I cannot help thinking how happy is the fate of the French, the German, or the Russian Minister of War, who has the magnitude of his Army settled for him by the magnitude of the population of the country to which he belongs, all of whose questions of strategy lie plain and simple before him, with none of the perplexities and troubles which inevitably beset any Government dealing with military questions in this country, and which it has to settle as best it may. And, Sir, these difficulties, inherent in the complexity of our military problem are, I am bound to say, greatly increased by the changing tempers, the changing passions, of the public whom we serve, and of the House of Commons on whom we depend. I believe that mariners whose unlucky star brings them into conflict with a tropical tornado have first the unpleasant experience of facing a hurricane driving from the east. If they are lucky enough to survive it, they come for a short space into calm water, and, as they sail on, they cut into a hurricane equally violent which blows from the west. Well, one of those circular storms is being faced by His Majesty's Government at the present moment. Conceive a man who went into some Rip-Van-Winkle slumber in the middle of the controversy raised by the earlier stages of the South African War. He would go to sleep with ringing in his ears, "Organisation," "Numbers," "More troops"—as the right hon. Gentleman who last spoke clamoured for them only two years ago—"More troops," "Better organisation." And I suppose his dreams would go on with these words ringing in his ears. He would awake two years after only to discover that the lessons of the South African war were that we were to have fewer troops and no organisation. However much his historical studies might have prepared him for these alternations between the hot and cold fit, I think both the rapidity and the magnitude of the change would give him sufficiently considerable cause for astonishment.

Now, Sir, I do not wish to blow the trumpet of the Government in this matter of Army reform. But I do think that we have deserved well of the country in circumstances which everybody must admit were circumstances of great difficulty. We had a war which required us to send out a body of troops incomparably greater than our present critics think the British Empire is ever going to send out again. The Reserve was heavily drawn upon and necessarily seriously impaired by the great strain of the long war. We had to face a heavy problem of recruiting; we had a great many reforms of a minor character to carry out. I believe that in all these cases we have done everything that could possibly be expected from us. I have shown how much we have endeavoured to do to make the Volunteers all that they can be, and ought to be, and will be, as an element in our great citizen Army. The depleted Reserves are rapidly being filled by the measures that we have proposed. Recruiting is admittedly a difficulty. The difficulties of recruiting have not been surmounted—and who can say what the future of recruiting may be? I admit I cannot. It is the standing difficulty of all Governments and Ministers for War—but, at all events, so far as we can see, by our immediate measures the recruiting difficulty has been met as no one would venture to say it would be. The position of the soldiers has been enormously improved; armaments have been greatly improved; the Medical Corps has been greatly improved. I do not believe there is a single branch connected with the Army in which the beneficent action which we have taken in the last two or three years will not be felt for many, many years. But, Sir, do I claim that the decisions that we have come to are final and irreversible? We have refused deliberately to lower the Army beyond what we think the proper strength required by the needs of the Empire; but, if we ourselves, on a more careful revision of the facts, or if our successors after us come to a different conclusion, there is nothing we have done which prevents us or them from making the necessary changes and introducing the consequent diminution in our expenditure. I greatly doubt whether any study we can give to the strategic problems of this Empire is likely to show that, in the future, any great diminution in our armaments, or of the cost of our armaments, is likely or possible. In any case, it will be for the future to judge.

What has to be judged now by the House is whether or not they will continue to the Government—whose military policy I have just sketched, and whose policy on other matters it would be inopportune to touch on—whether they will continue to this Government their confidence or whether they will not. My hon. friend the Member for Plymouth, indeed, informed us last night that, in pressing this matter to a division, he and his friends have no desire to do an injury to the Government, or even to my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War. He acted for the good of his soul, not for the injury of his official career or the position of the Government of which he is an honoured Member. My hon. friend is not a very old Member of this House; had he been so I am sure he could not have advanced a proposition of that kind, which, to those of longer experience, is obviously from a Parliamentary point of view absurd. The vote of to-night is, and cannot but be, a vote of confidence. It is a vote of confidence from which I, at all events, do not shrink, by which I mean that the policy which is attacked is one in which I believe. With us is the unpopularity of the heavy Army expenditure, and the taxation which that Army expenditure involves, and the financial difficulty and cost and criticism which it naturally provokes. Yes, Sir, that is so, and we do not shrink from that responsibility. If we see, and when we see, any reasonable ground for thinking that the financial burden may be diminished, the financial strain relaxed, we shall not hesitate to come down to the House and tell them with the utmost satisfaction both of the changed circumstances which have changed our opinion and the consequent relief to the taxpayer which the change of policy may bring with it. But until that time comes we should be utterly contemptible if in obedience to a natural, though I think an unfortunate, change in public opinion we were to admit for a moment that we did not believe that the forces we have asked for are forces necessary for the safety of the Empire; if we were to diminish by a jot, if, after having gone to the country and made Imperial speeches for four years, we were to go back to them and say: "Imperialism was all very well when it was popular, was all very well before the public realised what it cost, but now that the cost has been realised and now that in consequence it is a little less popular, we will change our scale of demand for Imperial defence, and we will trim our sails to suit the changing gales of popular favour." That would, in my judgment, be utterly contemptible, and if the House desires that an Army scale should be adopted which we think inadequate to the needs of the Empire which we serve, it is to another Government that they must look.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 145; Noes, 261. (Division List No. 7.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (*Middx.*)
Bowles, T. G. (*Lynn Regis*)
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Ellis, John Edward
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Saml. T. (*Glamorgan*)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (*St. Albans*
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Gordon, Maj. Evans-(*Tr. H'ml'ts*
Grey, Rt. Hn. Sir E. (*Berwick*
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hardie, J. Keir (*Merthyr Tyd*
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (*Fife, West*)
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David B. (*Swansea*)
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
M'Kenna, Reginald
Malcolm, Ian
Markham, Arthur Basil
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*
Morley, Charles (*Breconshire*)
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (*Montrose*
Moulton, John Fletcher
Newnes, Sir George
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Palmer, Sir Charles M. (*Durham*
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pemberton, John S. G.
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Samuel, S. M. (*Whitehapel*)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick B.*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (*Northants*
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (*Carmarthen, E.*
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glamorgan, E.*)
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thomas, F. Freeman-(*Hastings*
Thomas, J A (*Glamorgan Gower*
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Walton, John Lawson (*Leeds, S.*
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*)
Weir, James Galloway
Welby, Lt-Col A. C. E. (*Taunton*
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, George (*York, W. R.*
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Fred. W. (*Norfolk, Mid.*
Wilson, Henry J. (*York, W. R.*
Wilson, John (*Durham, Mid.*)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T (*H'ddersf'd*
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Beckett and Major Seely.

NOES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (*Hornsey*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, Sir Fras. T. (*Windsor*)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alx. H. (*Shropsh.*)
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt Hn J A (*Glasg.*)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig, Charles C. (*Antrim, S.*
Cranborne, Lord

Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, H. Shepherd (*Bolton*)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R. (*Tr. Haml'ts*
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Jos. C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (*City of Lond*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nairn*
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore, Hn. G. R. C. Ormsby (*Salop*
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Gray, Ernest (*West Ham*)
Greene, Sir E. W. (*Bury St. Ed.*
Greene, Hy. D. (*Shrewsbury*)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hamilton, Marq. of (*Londondy*
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robt. Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashfd*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hobhouse, Rt Hn H. (*Somerset E*
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (*Sheff., B'tside*)
Horner, Frederick William
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (*Salop*
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockie, John
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, Rt. Hon. Jas. (*Kent*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*)
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, W. J. H (*Dumfriessh.*)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, William
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (*Hants.*
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robt. Jasper (*Shropshire*
Morgan, David J (*Walthamst'w*
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt Hn. A Graham (*Bute*
Myers, William Henry
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robt. Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Lieut-Col. Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hn. M. W. *Stalybridge*
Ridley, S. Forde (*Bethnal Green*
Ritchie, Rt Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (*Liverpool*)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Saunderson, Rt. Hn Col. Edw. J.
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, East*
Smith, H C. (*North'mb Tyneside*
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks.*
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (*Ormskirk*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J G. (*Oxf'd Univ.*
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (*Notts.*
Wharton, Rt. Hn. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H. (*Ashton und. Lyne*
Williams, Colonel R. (*Dorset*)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York, E. R.*
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (*Yorks.*
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Main Question again proposed.

Debate arising; and, it being after Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed Tomorrow.

LIGHT LOCOMOTIVES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till This day.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 25th February, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

DOVER CORPORATION BILL.

"To authorise the Corporation of Dover to borrow money for the purchase of the undertaking of the Dover Electricity Supply Company, Limited; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

KINGSTON-UPON-HULL CORPORATION BILL.

"To empower the Corporation of Kingston-upon-Hull to make certain street works and bridges; to construct additional tramways; and to confer further powers on them in regard to streets, buildings, and sewers, and the health, local government, and improvement of the city; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

STOKE NEWINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL BILL.

"To authorise agreements between the Corporations of the Metropolitan Boroughs of Stoke Newington, Hackney, and Islington with respect to the supply of electricity in bulk, and to confer powers upon the Corporation of Stoke Newington with respect to the purchase of lands; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Leith; Inverchaolain; and, Fearn; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petition from Hackney, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INEBRIATES ACTS (INSPECTOR'S REPORT).

Copy presented, of Supplement to the Report of the Inspector, under the Inebriates Acts, for the year 1901, being a collection of British, Colonial, and Foreign Statutes relating to the penal and reformatory treatment of Habitual Inebriates [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES (ELECTORS, ETC.) (UNITED KINGDOM).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 18th February.—*Sir Charles Dilke*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 34.]

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF SOUTHAMPTON).

Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of Southampton altering certain Polling Districts in the Basingstoke Parliamentary Division [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF LANCASTER).

Copy presented, of Order, dated 6th November, 1902, made by the County Council of the County Palatine of Lancaster altering certain Polling Districts in the Accrington Parliamentary Division [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF LANCASTER).

Copy presented, of Order, dated 5th February, 1903, made by the County Council of the County Palatine of Lancaster, altering certain Polling Districts in the Accrington Parliamentary Division [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX).

Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of the County of Middlesex altering certain Polling Districts in the county [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

NEW SOUTH WALES (WOMEN'S FRANCHISE ACT, 1902).

Copy presented, of The Women's Franchise Act, 1902 (New South Wales) [by Act; to lie upon the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

NEW SOUTH WALES (PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1902).

Copy presented, of the Parliamentary Elections (Amendment) Act, 1902 (New South Wales) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 35.]

DUCHY OF CORNWALL.

Account presented, of the Receipts and Disbursements of the Duchy of Cornwall for the year ended 31st December, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [Bill 36.]

TREATY SERIES (No. 3, 1903).

Copy presented, of Accession of the Empire of Korea to the Convention, signed at Geneva on the 22nd August, 1864, for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded in Armies in the Field, 8th January, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Papers laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House—

Bank of England.—Accounts of Exchequer Bills and other Government Securities purchased, and of the Amount of Balances of Sums issued for the payment of Dividends, etc., for the year ending 5th January, 1903, [by Act] to be printed. [No. 37.]

Land Transfer Rules.—Copy of Rules made in pursuance of the Land Transfer Act, 1875, dated 10th February, 1903 [by Act].

Post Office (Contract for Accelerated Mail Service to and from Ireland, *via* Carlisle, Stranraer, and Larne).—Copy ordered, "of Contract, dated 8th day of November, 1902, with the Glasgow and South Western Railway Company, the Portpatrick and Wigtownshire Joint Committee, and the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway Company, for an Accelerated Mail Service to and from Ireland *via* Carlisle, Stranraer, and Larne."—(*Mr. Hayes Fisher.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Irish Lights Board.

MR. MOONEY (Dublin Co., S.): To ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland under what Act of Parliament is the Irish Lights Board constituted; if the Commissioners are responsible to any Government Department; and, if so, which.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The Commissioners of Irish Lights are the successors of the Corporation for preserving and improving the Port of Dublin. This latter body was incorporated by the Act 26 Geo. III., c. 19, and the present body of Commissioners was reconstituted by the Dublin Port Act of 1867. The Commissioners are under the financial control of the Board of Trade. They cannot erect lighthouses, buoys, or beacons without the consent of Trinity House, and the control, as regards finance, of the Board of Trade.

Ireland—Payment of Local Government Auditors.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether local government auditors in Ireland are paid by fees or salaries, and whether they receive an allowance for expenses; and will he state the total amount of fees or salaries, and also the amount of expenses; whether there is a levy made by the Local Government Board on each of the public bodies in Ireland whose accounts are audited; and, if so, on what principle the levy is made; and what is the total amount collected in this manner in a single year.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Auditors are paid salaries, with allowances for travelling and subsistence. The expenditure in the financial year ended 31st March, 1902, was £7,873 on salaries, and £2,745 under the other two heads. The salaries and expenses of these officers are paid direct from the Vote for the Local Government Board. The Board is required by 35 and 36 Vic., cap. 69, to assess such fees for the audit of the accounts of local bodies as will partly recoup the Treasury for the amount of their salaries and expenses. In fixing the amount of the charge, regard is had to the amount of the funds involved and the time involved in the audit. The sum collected from local bodies in the year mentioned was £4,779.

Pay of British Troops in India—Views of Indian Council.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for India when he proposes to circulate the Papers containing the observations of the Viceroy and the members of his Council on the pay of the British troops in India.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) I am afraid that I am unable at present to name a date for the publication of the Papers referred to in the Question, as certain details preliminary to arbitration have to be settled before the correspondence will be complete.

Police Superannuation in Scotland.

MR. WYLIE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the Lord Advocate, seeing that in their Report on the Police Superannuation (Scotland) Bill, introduced in 1901, the Select Committee concur in the view that there should not be a great difference in the attractions provided by the English as against the Scotch service, and that, as stated in the Report, the Scottish police would be willing to accept as satisfactory less than the increased scale suggested in said Bill, whether he can now hold out some hope of bringing in a Bill this session to deal with the question on the lines suggested by the Report.

(*Answered by Mr. Graham Murray.*) The Secretary for Scotland is unable to depart from the answer which was given to the hon. Member last session,† viz., that in view of the terms of the Report of the Select Committee he is not at present prepared to bring in a Bill dealing with the subject.

Vaccination in Scotland—English and Scotch Regulations.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): To ask the Lord Advocate whether the Vaccination (Scotland) Act of 1898, which expires this year, will be renewed; and, if so, whether the claims of Scotland to equal treatment with England in the supply of glycerinated calf lymph from an animal vaccine station for the use of vaccinators in Scotland will be recognised and provided for as South of the Tweed; and whether the conscientious objector to vaccination in Scotland will be placed in the same position as in England.

(*Answered by Mr. Graham Murray.*) The Act to which the hon. Member refers is an English Act. There is no such Act applicable to Scotland which expires this year.

Sheep Scab—Compulsory Dipping.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, in view of the outbreak of scab amongst the flocks of the United Kingdom, especially in England, he will consider the advisability of introducing a measure for the compulsory dipping of sheep for the prevention of scab, having regard to the fact that sheep scab has been prevented in New South Wales by such compulsory legislation.

(*Answered by Mr. Hanbury.*) Although there was a slight increase in the number of outbreaks reported in Great Britain last year as compared with 1901, it was still very much lower than in any of the last ten years before 1901. I hope, however, that the effect of the Bill which I have announced my intention to introduce to enable local authorities to enforce the compulsory dipping of sheep will lead to a further reduction of the disease. I gather from the information before me that the legislation in New South Wales to which the hon. Member refers did not do more than require the compulsory dipping of infected and suspected sheep, and local authorities are already empowered to require this to be done under the Sheep Scab Order of 1898.

Portsmouth Dockyard—Storage of Steam Coal under Water.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he has yet received the Report of the Admiral Superintendent of Portsmouth Dockyard with reference to the storage of steam coal under water; and, if so, whether he can state the nature of it.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) The Report from Portsmouth has been received, and is under consideration. It is proposed to make a trial on a small scale.

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† Sec. (4) *Debates*, cii., 532 and 1254.

Compensation for Telegraphic Errors—Case of D. O'Sullivan.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Postmaster General whether compensation will be given to Mr. Denis O'Sullivan, Killorglin, Kerry, for the loss which he suffered owing to the mistake made by a telegraph clerk in transmitting the price of goods in November last.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I much regret that the mistake should have occurred, but I am not in a position to give compensation for the loss which the sender of the telegram unfortunately sustained. The Post Office is not liable for any loss or damage which may be incurred by reason or on account of any mistake or default in the transmission or delivery of a telegram, and due notice of this is given on the telegram forms used by the public.

R.A.M.C. Militia.

CAPTAIN JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Royal Army Medical Corps Militia is under orders for immediate disembodiment; and, if so, whether employment will preferentially be given to officers of the Militia in cases where officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps are not available.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) Five companies of the Royal Army Medical Corps Militia will be disembodied on 28th February and the remaining four on 31st March. Preference will be given to officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps Militia who apply and are recommended for employment in cases where officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps are not available.

Pollution of Fish by Sewage.

SIR JOSEPH DIMSDALE (London): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to a recent report of the medical officer of health for the city of London on shell fish and sewage; and whether he will take any, and if so what, action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Yes, my attention has been called to this report. The Royal Commission on Sewage Disposal are taking evidence and making investigations on the subject of dangerous contamination of shell fish by sewage, with a view to ascertaining the measures necessary for obviating risk to the public health from this cause. I have caused to be sent to the Commission a copy of the report referred to, and of other reports relating to this matter.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

South African Rebels.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will grant a return of all sentences passed and executed on all rebels born in the Cape or Natal Colonies where the crime was simple rebellion; or, if this return would be costly or tedious to obtain, would he now state what was the ordinary or average sentence enforced against Cape or Natal rebels.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): Under the Cape Indemnity Act special tribunals were established, and the rank and file rebels were disfranchised for five years. That Act expired in April, 1901, and after that date rebels were tried by military courts-martial, and the return of the sentences of the military courts has been published. At the end of the war all unexpired sentences of the military courts were reviewed by Lord Alverstone's Commission, the report of which has been issued as a Parliamentary paper. At the time of the surrender of the Boer forces it was decided that the rank and file of the rebels who surrendered should be disfranchised for life, and a proclamation was issued giving effect to this. The Natal Government give it as their opinion that the rebels should be dealt with according to the law of the Colony. I have no further information in regard to Natal, but I have no doubt it can be obtained if the hon. and gallant Member so desires.

Publicans' Licences.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the

Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the reduction in the number of publicans' licences; whether he has considered its effect on increasing the value of the remaining licences; and whether in framing the next Budget he will consider the possibility of increasing the duty payable on publicans' licences generally.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): It is not usual for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make a statement prior to the Budget as to the manner in which he is to deal with taxation. I may say, however, that, as the hon. and learned Gentleman is no doubt aware, the duties on publicans' licences are assigned to local authorities. It appears to me that, if the hon. and learned Gentleman is correct in assuming that reduction of public houses increases the value of the houses that remain, the question would certainly arise as to whether, if any increase in the licence duty were imposed on the remaining houses, the proceeds should not be applied to purposes connected with the reduction of licences.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had considered the question of the excess or monopoly value created in the licences by the low rate of duty.

*MR. RITCHIE: In regard to that, the first part of my answer equally applies. These duties are duties which do not concern the Imperial Exchequer, but are allocated to the local authorities for the purpose of local——

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Do I understand you to say that any additional duty on licences which Parliament may impose must necessarily go to the local authorities?

*MR. RITCHIE: I do not say that that necessarily is so; but it would be extremely difficult to say that one portion of the licence duty should go to local authorities and another to Imperial.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): Does the right hon. Gentleman contemplate legislation on this point?

COLONEL NOLAN: I wish to know if the statement is true that the licence duties go to the local authorities in England, why the statement is not true in Ireland.

*MR. RITCHIE: That is so in England——

COLONEL NOLAN: Will he make it so in Ireland?

*MR. RITCHIE: Under the Local Government Act of 1888, and in Ireland under the Act of 1898. In regard to my right hon. friend's (Mr. Lowther) inquiry, I cannot undertake to make any promise in regard to legislation.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: Is it not the case that these taxes are collected by the Imperial authorities, and made over to the local authorities?

*MR. RITCHIE: That is so; they are collected in the ordinary way and made over to the local authorities.

Swine Fever Movement Orders.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware that dissatisfaction exists amongst those interested in the breeding, feeding, and sale of pigs owing to the inconvenience and loss occasioned by the absence of definite information as to the scheduling of districts under the operation of the Swine Fever Movement Orders; and whether he will consider the advisability of officially announcing such Orders in the agricultural and live stock papers.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): It rests with the local authorities, in conformity with their statutory obligations, to give publicity to any orders of the Board, or to any regulations they themselves may make, which affect the movement of stock within their respective districts, and I am unable to interfere with their discretion in this respect. A copy of every local order made by the Board under the Diseases of Animals Acts is sent to the *Meat Trades Journal* and to the *Cowkeeper and Dairymen's Journal*. I should be happy to extend this arrangement to any other agricultural and live stock papers which may desire to receive these orders.

Postmen's Promotions in the Manchester Post Office.

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, whether, in making the two last promotions to the position of head postman at Manchester, the claims of qualified senior men of good character were considered; how many such men were passed over and for what reason; whether the fact that the two officers referred to were allowance owners, and that by their promotion the Department saved 14s. a week in allowances, influenced the postmaster of Manchester when making his recommendations; and whether, in view of the dissatisfaction caused by the recent promotions, he will cause inquiry to be made into the mode of selection at Manchester for the two new appointments in question.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The claims and qualifications of all the postmen ranking above those who were promoted were fully considered, and the men selected for promotion, who stood No. 99 and 133 respectively on their class, where those whom I considered to be the best fitted to perform the duties of head postmen. It is the case that the two men in question were formerly in receipt of allowances which had been merged in their wages, but this circumstance did not influence my choice. The selection of officers for promotion is always an invidious task, but I do my best to treat the whole staff fairly and I see no reason for opening a further enquiry into this case.

Telephones in Irish Post Offices.

MR. MCGOVERN (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether, in view of the fact that a number of the sub-post offices in Ireland have been supplied with telephones for the purpose of connecting them for telegraphic purposes with the head or district post offices, and that representations have been made to the postal authorities that it would be of benefit to the public, especially to the commercial classes, if they were allowed to use these telephones on the payment of a small charge, and seeing that it would not involve the Department in any serious outlay, he will direct a trial of the experiment to be made.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: This proposal was brought to my notice last autumn by the hon. Member for West Islington,† and I am endeavouring to find means to adopt it. An experiment on these lines is already being made in one case, and if the hon. Member will send me in writing the names of any offices he has specially in view I shall be happy to see what can be done.

STANDING ORDERS.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Standing Orders do consist of Thirteen Members:—Sir John Brunner, Sir William Coddington, Mr. John Edward Ellis, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Halsey, Mr. Humphreys-Owen, Mr. James Lowther, Sir James Rankin, Mr. William Redmond, Sir Mark M'Taggart Stewart, Mr. Whitmore, and Mr Wodehouse were accordingly nominated Members of the Committee.—(*Mr. Halsey.*)

SELECTION.

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection do consist of Eleven Members: —Mr. Blake, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Sir John Dorington, Sir William Hart Dyke, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. M'Kenna, Sir Mark M'Taggart Stewart, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Wodehouse, and the Chairman of the Select Committee on Standing Orders were accordingly nominated Members of the Committee.—(*Mr. Halsey.*)

NEW BILLS.

PLUMBERS' REGISTRATION BILL.

"To provide for the Registration of Plumbers," presented by Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland; supported by Sir James Rankin, Sir John Rolleston, Colonel Nolan, Dr. Farquharson, and Mr. Nannetti; to be read a second time upon Friday 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 59.]

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxv., 848.

PREVENTION OF DISEASE (FRUIT TREES) BILL.

"To provide for the eradication of disease and of injurious insects amongst fruit trees in nursery gardens," presented by Sir James Rankin; supported by Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Mr. Arkwright, and Captain Percy Clive; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th May, and to be printed. [Bill 60.]

TRAMWAYS (HOURS OF LABOUR) BILL.

"To restrict the hours of labour of tramway workers in the United Kingdom," presented by Mr. Nannetti; supported by Mr. Harrington, Mr Field, Mr. Joyce, Mr. Bell, Mr. Crean, Mr. Sloan, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Mooney, Mr. Sheehan, and Mr. John Burns; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 61.]

SCHOOL BOARD (ELECTORATE) SCOTLAND BILL.

"To admit to the School Board Electorate of Scotland persons entitled to vote for the County Council Election," presented by Mr. Weir; supported by Mr. Leveson-Gower, Mr. Nicol, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Bignold, Mr. Harmsworth, and Mr. Caldwell; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 62.]

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Main Question again proposed.

THE IRISH LAND CONFERENCE.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): It is many years since any representative of the Irish National Party in this House has moved an Amendment to the Address under the circumstances and conditions which, for the moment at any rate, happily apply to the attitude of the Irish people to the Government of the day. Irish Amendments to the Address almost invariably have been protests against the refusal of successive Governments to deal with admitted Irish grievances. But on this occasion the Amendment which I desire to move, and which stands in my name on the Paper, is not to be regarded as in any sense a hostile demonstration, but rather as a friendly warning and advice to men who we hope and believe are engaged in the task of framing a great measure of justice and appeasement for Ireland. Our hopes and belief are founded on the declarations of the Government themselves, on the declarations of the Chief Secretary, on the most remarkable speeches of the Lord Lieutenant, and on the remarkable speech recently made by the new Under Secretary for Ireland, as well as upon the words put by the Cabinet in the King's Speech, where the Sovereign is made to declare that the forthcoming measure is one which will complete the process of abolishing dual ownership in Ireland. Neither must this Amendment be taken as an attempt to extract from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary any premature statement on this matter. All that I think we can fairly ask from him or expect from him at this moment is that he will give us a general assurance that he is engaged in an honest attempt to give effect in his forthcoming Land Bill to the general conclusions of the recent Land Conference. We are content, difficult though perhaps it may be for us to bide our time in patience, to give the right hon. Gentleman every fair and legitimate opportunity for the careful preparation of his measure. The situation in Ireland is too delicate and too critical, and the issues at stake are too vast and too vital, for any man, and especially anyone speaking in the name of the Nationalist Party in this House, to take the responsibility of saying or doing anything at this moment to increase the difficulties of the position. My object is the exact reverse. I desire to assist the right hon. Gentleman in coming to a just conclusion, and I desire to do so by making plain to the House of Commons the main facts of the situation which exist in Ireland at this moment, by explaining to hon. Members how vast and far reaching are the issues at stake, how an unexpected and unparalleled opportunity has arisen for a great measure of constructive statesmanship, and how easily and how safely this most thorny and difficult of Irish questions can be settled under the circumstances which exist at this moment in Ireland.

One of the great disadvantages that Ireland suffers under by being governed by this House is that whatever may be the intentions of hon. Members from Great Britain, and however great may be their goodwill, they still come to the consideration of all Irish problems with very vague and imperfect knowledge. Confusion of mind on Irish questions, misunderstandings of Irish views, and an imperfect knowledge of the real facts of the situation—all these things are, it seems to me, necessarily inherent in an assembly constituted as is the House of Commons. Of the meaning and consequences of recent events in Ireland there is in this country—it is manifest from the comments in the public journals—considerable misunderstanding, and, of course, that misunderstanding exists in this House also. The great event which distinguishes the present political situation in Ireland from every situation which has existed since the Union, is the recent agreement which has been come to between the representatives of the landlords and the representatives of the tenants as to the final settlement of the Irish Land question, and it cannot but be to the advantage of this House—it cannot but be of advantage to the right hon. Gentleman in the task that is before him, that the House of Commons should be made clearly to understand how this Conference came about; what authority it had to speak on the question, what were exactly the proposals that it made, and how those proposals have been received in Ireland by the two great classes concerned in this question of the settlement of the land. When the idea of holding such a Conference was first put forward, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary published a most remarkable statement—a statement which every one at once recognised was bound to have far reaching effects on the future of this question. He said that no English Government could settle this question, but that the settlement must depend upon an agreement between the landlords and the tenants, and that the function of the Government was to afford facilities for the carrying out of any such agreement. These were his words—

> "No Government can settle the Irish Land question. It must be settled by the parties interested. The extent of useful action on the part of any Government is limited to providing facilities in so far as that may be possible for giving effect to any settlement arrived at by the parties."

The agreement of which the right hon. Gentleman spoke has been arrived at in Ireland, and it now remains for him to fulfil his part of the great work in providing in his Bill the facilities that will be necessary to carry that agreement into effect. How, Sir, did this conference come about? A few short years ago, indeed I think I might safely say a few short months ago, the idea that the two contending parties in this terrible conflict could be brought together and could agree upon terms of settlement of the dispute seemed wild and almost insane. Unfortunately these two parties have been separated by a lamentable history. They were separated to a large extent by race, creed, and political aspirations. They were separated by memories of sufferings, bloodshed and crime, by memories of eviction and depopulation, and the scattering of the Celtic race all over the world. They were in addition separated by the belief—a belief which for my part I never entertained at all—they were, I say, separated by the belief which was current in Ireland even until the other day, that their interests were really divergent. But in recent years events have travelled very fast in Ireland, and the minds of men have widened. The landlords in Ireland have come to recognise the hard fact that the days of their ascendency and power have gone for ever, while the tenants have come to recognise the fact and, in my judgment, not one moment too soon, that the indefinite continuation of this land war meant the industrial ruin of their country, and each side thus has come gradually but surely to the conclusion that peace is the highest interest of both. Whatever opinions may have been held, whether the landlords believed that the continuation of the struggle for another generation would see the final scattering of the Celtic race, or whether, on the other side, the tenants believed that the fourth fixing of judicial rents would ruin, destroy and exterminate the landlords, whatever views might have been held on these points in the past, both sides have now come to the conclusion that their highest interest is to bring this conflict to a speedy end. The whole country is sick and tired of peddling and tinkering with this question. Only to-day I read a letter in one of the London papers from an Irish landlord who wound up by using these emphatic words—"For God's sake let us have no more peddling Land Bills." The feeling strongest in the minds of the Irish people of all classes is that this question should be settled, and it seems a strange thing to me to be able to say that I am convinced that the measure of the right hon. Gentleman of last year has been the final influence in bringing both classes together at this moment. He may not, perhaps, take that as a compliment, and, honestly, it is not intended as one. But both sides in Ireland denounced his Bill of last year; both landlords and tenants. And why? Because they saw in it no hope whatever of a settlement of the land question. They only saw in it one more attempt to approach this question, and they made up their minds that the only hope in the near future of obtaining a measure to settle the Irish land question was to unite their forces, and to press upon the Government terms which would be fair to each side, and which would effect a complete and final settlement of this war which, for so many centuries, has devastated and desolated their country.

How the conference came about may be very briefly stated. A respected Irish landlord, Mr. Talbot Crosby, made a proposal that a conference should be held between the representatives of the landlords and of the tenants. He made his proposal to what was called the Landowners' Convention, which is an organisation adopted quite recently, and, so far as I know, is the authorised mouthpiece of the landlords in Ireland. He proposed to this Landowners' Convention that they should agree to the principle of a conference, if the suggestion came to them from the tenants. He did not ask the landowners to take the initiative. He only asked them to agree to meet the representatives of the tenants if the tenants so desired. That moderate suggestion was rejected with scorn by the Landowners' Convention, and, as far as my information goes, it did not receive a seconder. At any rate it was unanimously rejected, and the proposal fell to the ground. Then Captain Shawe Taylor, the son of a landlord in the West of Ireland, with a directness and audacity which took away men's breath in Ireland, issued in his own name an invitation to representatives of the landlords and tenants. He said "Why go to the Landowners' Convention, or why go to the United Irish League? I will invite a conference myself." He accordingly issued an invitation to Lord Barrymore, to the Duke of Abercorn, to Lord Clonbrock, and to the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh, as representing the landowners, while as the representatives of the tenants he invited the hon. Member for Cork, the Lord Mayor of Dublin, the Member for South Tyrone, and myself. When that proposal was made we, on the tenants' side, felt ourselves in somewhat of a difficulty, because on the one hand we did not know what authority he had to make such a suggestion, and on the other hand we recognised that the landlords' names could be taken as representatives of their class, and we felt that it would be a very grave responsibility to refuse on the part of the tenants to meet those gentlemen. Accordingly we accepted the invitation, but the landlords refused to meet us, and this proposal, like Mr. Talbot Crosby's, fell absolutely to the ground. Public opinion, however, had been moving in Ireland in the meantime, and a number of independent landlords who did not believe that their class was adequately represented by the Landowners' Convention came together and formed a Committee, of which Lord Dunraven was elected Chairman. They at once took steps to test the real opinions of the landowners of Ireland. They issued voting papers to every landlord who owned over 500 acres, and they put to him the question, "Are you for or against a conference?" The result was, certainly to me, most surprising. By a majority of nearly three to one, the landowners of Ireland voted in favour of a conference, although, as I have pointed out, landowners who owned less than 500 acres, a class of men who, because they were small and poor would naturally have been most anxious to vote in favour of a conference, were excluded. It at once became evident that the Landowners' Convention did not really represent the opinions of the mass of the Irish landlords, and, emboldened by that knowledge, Lord Dunraven's Committee took measures to bring about a conference. They issued an invitation, not to individuals but to the Irish Parliamentary Party as a body. I received a letter asking me to bring the question before that Party, and to invite it to elect delegates on behalf of the tenants to meet representatives who would be so elected on behalf of the landlords. The Irish Party selected the Member for Cork, the Lord Mayor of Dublin, and myself, and they suggested in addition that, in order that the tenants in the North of Ireland should be adequately represented, the Member for South Tyrone should also be one of the delegates. The Landowners' Convention was asked to assist in the selection of the Landlords' delegates, but refused. And Lord Dunraven's Committee itself have made the selection, choosing Lord Dunraven, Lord Mayo, Colonel Poer, and Colonel Everard to meet the tenants' delegates. Certainly it was a strange and fateful meeting. I well remember the feelings I heard expressed on all sides in Ireland at the time; men shrugged their shoulders with incredulity, and poured ridicule on the idea that such a gathering could ever come to a unanimous decision. Extreme men on all sides scoffed at the idea that any good could come out of it. But in the end the doubters were put to silence by the production of a unanimous report—a unanimous report arrived at by compromises, and by the large concessions, both of interest and sentiment, made by both parties for the sake of peace. And here let me say one word to the right hon. Gentleman, which I think it necessary to say. The compromise agreed to at the conference was a compromise agreed to in view of the coming Land Bill. If the coming Land Bill rejects the report of that conference, then the compromise goes. Nobody suggests that that compromise is a compromise which is to stand for ever. No. If, in a moment of inconceivable folly and unreasonable timidity, the right hon. Gentleman and the Government reject that compromise, then each side is relegated back to its position. The position then will be that the peace negotiations are at an end, and the peace negotiators will be free to go back to their individual hostile camps.

What was the nature of the compromise which was arrived at? With subsidiary matters I do not intend to deal. I think it would be foolish, and perhaps injurious, to do so, even though they may raise such acute and important questions as that of the evicted tenants, and similar matters which naturally arouse the keenest anxiety in the popular mind in Ireland. Sir, figures, calculations, percentages, the number of years' purchase, and matters of that kind, I put at present on one side; I want simply to impress on the House of Commons the broad, vital facts of the situation as they now are. It was agreed at that Conference that on the one side the landlords in the settlements should receive such financial treatment as would substantially leave them their net second term rentals—their net rental as fixed after the second revision of rents, under the Act of 1891, and thus they would be enabled to sell their estates, and still be in a position to continue to live in the country. It was agreed, on the other hand, that the tenants should be enabled to buy at much the same price as they had been buying in the immediate past under the existing Land Acts, so that, with no indefinite prolongation of the transaction, they should obtain an immediate reduction of a most substantial character in their annual payments in comparison with their twice revised and twice reduced judicial rents. This is not the time or place to go into details. It is enough for me to state generally that that was the nature and substance of the agreement come to. But it is necessary that I should say something more. It is necessary for me to state that the compromise agreed to in that room has been accepted by both parties all through the country. Naturally, there has been the keenest interest in this matter and widespread discussion. Practically every representative public board in Ireland has discussed this matter, and, in my personal recollection of Irish politics, I have never seen such a unanimous declaration of opinion. The Irish Parliamentary Party, which, of course, is a party elected in the main by tenant farmers, unanimously endorsed the findings of this conference, and accepted, on behalf of the tenants, this compromise. The United Irish League—on which however the Chief Secretary and I may differ as to its power, is, he has admitted, a body containing 1,300 or 1,400 branches, almost entirely composed of tenant farmers—has, through its governing body, unanimously accepted this compromise. The County Councils all through the country, north, south, east, and west, have passed unanimous resolutions accepting the compromise on the part of the people. The District Councils have done the same, and, so far as I am concerned, I have not seen any single expression of opinion rejecting this compromise coming from any body of tenants in any part of Ireland. And now, what about the landlords? The Landowners' Convention, which had obstructed the conference up to the very last, and which, when it was actually sitting in the Mansion House derided it and scoffed at it, has unanimously passed a resolution thanking the conference for its work, and accepting the compromise which has been arrived at. So far, therefore, as Ireland is concerned, so far as all classes are concerned, they have come to an absolute agreement to accept this compromise at this conference between landlords and tenants.

But there is a third portion of the compromise, the acceptance of which does not rest with landlords or tenants, but does rest with the Government. The compromise which was arrived at by us is impossible of fulfilment without State aid. I want to be very precise and clear on this point. The basis, and the necessary basis, of the conference agreement and scheme was that State aid should be provided. I can explain this in a very few words. Our scheme provided a certain financial treatment for the landlords, and a certain financial treatment also for the tenants. But that left a gap between what the tenants might fairly be expected to pay, and what the landlords might fairly expect to get. The whole basis of the compromise arrived at by us at the Mansion House was that the State should be asked to fill up that gap. It has been suggested that the gap could be filled up in some other way. It has been suggested, for example, that it could be filled up by some of those financial juggles with which the Treasury are so familiar, and which by an absurd prolongation of the term of repayment, or by some other device of that sort, would, in the end, directly or indirectly, make the tenants provide all or the greater part of the money necessary to fill up the gap. I respectfully warn the right hon. Gentleman and the Government against listening to any such suggestion as that. The unanimous spirit and intention of the agreement would be violated by any such scheme, and I have no hesitation in saying, so far as the tenant farmers of Ireland are concerned, that any attempt by financial jugglery or indirect means, to put upon their shoulders the burden of providing the money to fill up this gap, would be resented and vigorously opposed, and would most unquestionably ruin the scheme. This proposal is a voluntary proposal. If it is to be of any value in the settlement of the question, the tenants must be willing to buy and the landlords must be willing to sell, and if by any of your Treasury juggles, of which we have had some experience in Ireland in the past, you put, in any indirect way, on the shoulders of the tenant, a burden which is unjust, which he cannot bear, and which he ought not to undertake, then your Bill will be a dead letter and your condition will be worse, while the compromise suggested will be gone. This I do say, as representing the tenants, that this compromise goes to the extreme limit of conciliation and concession. Some people perhaps think we went too far. I am not one of those. I am one of those who believe that whatever happens, whether the Government introduce an adequate Land Bill or not, the exhibition of reasonableness, conciliation, and compromise, made by the tenants on this occasion, will be a valuable asset on their side in any struggle that they may have to make in the future. I say we went to the extreme limits of concession, and the agreement that we came to in the name of the tenants will, if the Government puts it into their Land Bill, be accepted cheerfully by them and unanimously by us.

What, after all, is the nature of the State aid of which I am speaking? I am very glad to see the Chancellor of the Exchequer present. We know he is an eminently reasonable man, and I want to put this case before him and the Government. When I speak of State aid I am not speaking of the ordinary credit trans action—the use of the Imperial credit to enable the loans to be pleaded with. So far as Imperial credit is concerned, I am not called upon to argue that at all. Its policy has been decided by successive Houses of Parliament extending over the last fifteen or twenty years. For the last twenty years it has been the policy to use State credit in order to enable a transaction to be carried out. That policy has been approved by Government after Government, and Parliament after Parliament, and what is more useful to us is that the safety of the transaction has been absolutely proved. I was reading the other day a statement made in the year 1890 by the most distinguished statesman of the day, when he was opposing the Government Land Purchase Bill of that time. His chief objection was that undoubtedly there would be unpunctuality in the payment of the instalments and something in the way of repudiation by the tenants in the future. Both those statements have been falsified. What was the story the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had to tell the House as to the honesty with which this has been carried out by the tenants? Between 70,000 and 80,000 tenants in Ireland have been transformed from tenants into owners by the use of State credit, and £20,000,000 have been used for these transactions. Now how does the matter stand as regards arrears? There is not a penny due on account of arrears. A more complete proof of the safety of this policy could not be adduced. I pass from that, therefore, and say I am not called upon to argue the policy of State aid and its safety. When I speak of State aid, I mean money advanced for the purpose of filling up the gap between what the tenant can afford to pay and the landlord afford to take. Let me remind the House. In the year 1898, in order to make the passing of the Local Government Bill for Ireland as they considered safe, the Government proposed to lift off the shoulders of the landlords the whole of their share of the poor rates and put it upon the Imperial fund. That amounted to £300,000 a year, and represented a capital sum of some millions. That was done without a murmur on the part of the great majority of the House. The British taxpayer is not invoked to protest against his money being used in this way. The whole case was met by the first Lord of the Treasury and others who had advocated it by pointing out to the English Members that this was the great national policy of conferring the right of good government on Ireland, in conformity with what had been done in England and Scotland, and in order to put out of question the safety of that transaction, this money was required, and it was forthwith voted. But is it seriously to be argued that when this large sum of money was provided without a word to grease the wheels of county government in Ireland, that a moderate and temporary use of money is to be denied to carry out the greatest national policy, which, if successful, will transform Ireland and put an end almost at once to those features which have made the history of Ireland so sad and deplorable a study in the past. Let me say from the purely Irish point of view, in making this demand, we say we are not asking you to give us one penny.

Twenty years ago Sir Robert Giffen, in those days recognised as one of your chief financial experts, declared in an interesting letter which I came across the other day that Ireland at that time was paying more in taxes than her fair share, comparing her resources with those of Great Britain, and he showed by calculations that the Imperial Exchequer, at the time, twenty years ago, was getting out of Ireland £3,200,000 more than was her due. We all know that things have not stood still since; we know that Ireland's taxes have increased by millions since that time, and it is no answer, I respectfully urge, to say the taxation of Great Britain has increased in the same ratio. Great Britain is a rich country and is able to afford, if she chooses, the luxury of South African wars, but to put a proportion of that cost on Ireland inflicts the greatest hardships on one of the poorest countries in the world. Since then the Financial Relations Commission sat. I am not so foolish as to argue that question in the course of my present observations. But the fact remains that a Commission appointed by yourselves, manned by yourselves—by your greatest financial experts—declared that Ireland was over-taxed on a comparison of her wealth with that of Great Britain. The finding of that Commission has been disputed, but has not been disproved. It holds the field, and as every one who has listened to every debate upon the findings of that Commission knows, even those who dispute the accuracy of the finding, like the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, have not ventured to deny that in this matter of taxation, by reason of her poverty Ireland has been hardly treated by this country in the past. The least that we may ask is that this great chance of peace should not be jeopardised and lost by the want of a little help from the Exchequer. If this is to be of any value at all, it involves a great national policy. No man alive can put into pounds, shillings, and pence the value this great settlement will have, not only to Ireland, but to this country in the future. I know there are leaders of political parties on both sides of the House who think the disposal of this question would finally dispose of the question of Home Rule. That is not a correct view of our opinion. In my opinion, the result would be the exact reverse, but I have no hesitation in making this admission, that the settlement of this land question would undoubtedly remove almost immediately the cause of much turbulence and disaffection, and so moderate the hatred of classes, and soften the asperities of politica llife in Ireland, as to smooth and make easy the path towards other policies in the future.

Many years ago Mr. John Bright dealt with this question. Mr. Bright, in one sense, might be called the father of the policy of land purchase, although it is quite true he never contemplated its complete operation. He only suggested partial application of the principle of land purchase. But he made some proposals on this question of land purchase which I am afraid have been forgotten by many of his political admirers. Among those proposals he suggested that absentee landlords should be compulsorily bought out at 20 per cent. in excess of the market value of the land, and he proposed that that money should be provided by the Imperial Exchequer. There is another way of looking at this matter, even if you disregard the idea that this should be regarded as a great national policy. In the carrying out of this, what would be best and most economical? To take a niggardly view of the financial requirements? If you look at it simply as a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence, this is not a proposal which involves any loss or risk to the British taxpayer. Ireland at present is the poorest and the most extravagantly governed country in Europe. We know the reason of the enormous cost of the Irish administration. It has been admitted by the Chief Secretary himself that the rent-fixing machinery—the land court—alone costs £150,000, and our police cost £1,500,000. We have four times the number of police in Ireland that they have in Scotland, and that is not necessitated by the state of crime, because, of course, it is a matter of universal admission that, so far as ordinary crime is concerned, Ireland compares most favourably with Scotland or Great Britain. The Chief Secretary himself admitted, with commendable candour, that the very large force of police in Ireland was due to the land question. Settle the land question, and the police of Ireland ought to cost not a fourth more than they do in Scotland. I only allude to this matter to make this point, that even if you put on one side the idea that this is a great national policy, on which the future prosperity and happiness of a whole nation depends, and regard it simply as a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence, you would find the money necessary to carry your policy out would be more than met by the saving in your expenses of government in the next few years. To sum up, to carry out this compromise which has been accepted by the landlords and by the tenants, some State assistance is required. The actual amount required is, in our opinion, comparatively small, and would certainly be covered by economies in the immediate future. You owe something to Ireland on the basis of taxation. May I, without offence, say that you owe something to the Irish landlords? They have been your garrison in Ireland, and if now they are in a position, with ruin staring them in the face, and there is an opportunity of rescuing them from that position, I certainly think you are in honour bound to go to their relief, at any rate to a moderate extent. But, as the great reason for the whole of this demand, I say that this is a great national policy of appeasement, the value of which no man can appraise in mere pounds, shillings, and pence.

The situation in Ireland is very strange at this moment. It is full of hope, but because it is so full of hope it contains in itself a menace of danger. To raise the hopes of a whole people to the highest pitch of expectation by the speeches of the Chief Secretary, the Lord Lieutenant, and the Under Secretary, and by a declaration in the King's Speech, and then to dash those hopes to the ground, would be neither a safe nor a sane proceeding. At this moment the hearts of the whole of the people of Ireland are filled with a confident hope; crime is unknown; coercion has been suspended; class animosities, for the moment at any rate, are at an end; a united Ireland stands at the Bar of this House to-day and asks for the concession of this great measure of justice and appeasement. The whole people are waiting in painful and strained anxiety for the realisation of the hopes based upon your own declarations. It is, in truth, a veritable truce of God. It is not an exaggeration to say that the whole Irish people at this moment are thrilling with the expectation of deliverance from that which was once called by the late Lord Dufferin "the perennial desolation of a lovely and fertile island." Never in the history of this House had a Government a greater or more blessed opportunity of carrying to fruition a great and blessed policy. I would beg the right hon. Gentleman to have the courage to be thorough in his policy, to recognise that the time has passed for any further patching of, or peddling with, this question, and I am convinced that if he is thorough in his policy the result in the future of carrying that policy into effect will be like the waving of a fairy wand over a distracted and poverty-stricken country, calling out peace from turbulence, and wealth from poverty. If this Irish land question is settled on the basis of an occupying proprietary on the terms suggested by the Conference, a new Ireland will have been called into existence, and by the free industry of the people you will be making an addition to the industrial wealth of Ireland as surely as if you were able to call up countless thousands of rich new acres from the sea. By this policy you will be offering to the Irish people a new field at home for their industry, instead of driving them, generation after generation, as you have done in the past, to take across the ocean into other lands the strong arms, the brave and faithful hearts, and the bright intellects, which ought to be occupied at home in creating the prosperity and happiness of their own land; you will remove the enmity and hatred between classes, and inaugurate a new era of peaceful industry, and of national thrift and happiness. Do not, I beg of you, lightly throw away this golden opportunity, such as which no man living has ever witnessed before, and none of us, if it is rejected now, will see again. Do not reject it; on the contrary grant to the blessed influences of the moment, and to the united, peaceful demands of both parties concerned and of all classes in Ireland, this great measure of justice, remembering, as you ought to remember, that if you refuse this reform now, England will be forced to grant it sometime in the future, and perhaps under the pressure of such circumstances as no man can contemplate without dismay. While, as I said at the commencement of my speech, I do not expect a revelation of his Bill, I do hope the Chief Secretary will make some general declaration which will stimulate the confidence of the Irish people that they are on the eve of a settlement of this great question. I beg to move.

MR. CONDON (Tipperary, E.): I beg to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"'At the end of the Question, to add the words: 'And we humbly represent to your Majesty that it is in the highest interest of the State that advantage should be taken of the unexampled opportunity created by the Land Conference agreement for putting an end to agrarian troubles and conflicts between classes in Ireland by giving the fullest and most generous effect to the Land Conference Report in the Irish land-purchase proposals announced in the Speech from the Throne.'"—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): We have listened to a speech from the hon. and learned Member such as, in my recollection, which extends over not many years, but still as far back as the year 1887, has not been made in this House by any hon. Member in the position which he holds. It would be quite beside the mark, and an improper proceeding, to compliment the hon. and learned Member on what he has said. In this matter I am acting quite independently of the hon. and learned Member, and if he notes with satisfaction certain features in Irish life, I need not echo what he said. I say on my own initiative that I note those features, and I find that they are remarkable, and that they do carry with them some portents of hope. The hon. and learned Member at the outset of his speech declared that he would content himself with giving a friendly warning, and that he would not attempt to extract from me any premature statement on the Irish land purchase question. I am sorry that in his last words he went back a little from that position, and expressed the hope that although no declaration would be extracted from me, I should use some general words which would confirm—what expectation in Ireland? That is the point. In the latter part of his speech he came back very closely to the text of the Amendment, and that Amendment and the latter part of his speech do invite from me a pronouncement upon the very remarkable document to which the hon and learned Member alluded throughout his speech, viz., the report of the Land Conference. But such a pronouncement if it were at all favourable would be taken in Ireland to be an official *imprimatur* upon the report. More than that, it would be taken in Ireland to be an official *imprimatur* and acceptance of any interpretation which has been placed on that report. More than that, it would be taken as an official acceptance of every deduction which has been drawn from any interpretation which has been placed on that report. As many interpretations have been placed upon it, and as many deductions have been drawn from those interpretations, every man in Ireland who holds a view as to what that report embodies, would be at perfect liberty to charge me with a breach of faith if ultimately the Bill of the Government did not embody the precise deduction which he drew from the precise interpretation which he placed upon that report.

Hon. Members who represent English constituencies were not until this afternoon, and perhaps are not even now, after listening to the eloquent speech which has been addressed to the House, fully seised of the profound impression which this report has created in Ireland. Hon. Members who sit for English constituencies read, maybe, the Irish news in the English newspapers, but they do not read all the Irish newspapers, and they probably have no conception of the fact that ever since this report was published every leading article, and from two to four columns per diem of correspondence in every newspaper have been devoted to this report, to what it means, to what may be hoped from it, and to whether it will be adopted or not. In England we do not go so far in our journalistic enthusiasm. The topic of the moment—army reform, it may be, or the unemployed—is discussed for days and weeks, but the moment comes when suddenly you find the leading article is about something else—the advent of spring or the end of the hunting season—and in the correspondence columns you find that somebody has heard a cuckoo in the month of March. But in Ireland there has been greater earnestness and persistence over the report of this conference. The papers have been discussing nothing else on the scale I have ventured to indicate. But the interpretations placed upon the Report in the newspapers and the deductions drawn from those interpretations have been widely divergent. Those who have revelled in this voluminous exegesis have not arrived at identical conclusions.

Then I come back to the question I put first: Can I hope that any pronouncement I might make on the meaning of the report would fare better at the hands of those who in Ireland would comment upon it? Let me give an illustration of what I mean. If I said, for example, that the report was instinct with good sense and good feeling, and that it reflects great credit on all those who signed it; or if I said it was a momentous document, I should then be told that I had officially accepted the report, and it would be held that I have officially accepted every interpretation and every deduction from every interpretation upon that report. If, on the other hand, I said—and, if I did say it, it would be by way of praise and not of criticism—that it avoids altogether some of the difficulties that must be taken into account in arriving at a solution of this problem, I might awaken some morning and find the Government accused of having rejected the Dunraven Treaty. If I said the first without the second I should excite in some quarters a hope that cannot be fulfilled. If I said the second without the first, I should instil in other quarters fears which need not be entertained. If I said both—and probably if I were at liberty to make any pronouncement I should say both—I should only add to that speculative confusion which cannot be resolved until an early day when I ask leave to introduce a measure the intention of which, at all events, will be found clearly described in the gracious Speech from the Throne. I therefore respectfully decline to affix any official *imprimatur* to this important document, which, indeed, derives its importance from the very fact that it is in no sense official, that it is the spontaneous creation of representatives who do largely, perhaps wholly, represent two interests in Ireland which for long years have been antagonistic.

It may be argued by some that this report does not come into direct collision with any immutable facts of politics or finance; and in so far as that may be true, it is because the direction of this report, by the design of its authors, avoids or skirts many considerations to which weight must be given in any comprehensive solution of the land purchase question. It is true, because the authors of the report, very wisely if I may say so, have confined their report to considerations of a partial character, in which they were interested and which they were entitled to represent. The report is only worked out with an approach to detail in respect of two categories of facts, very important, first, in respect to what I may call the normal occupation holdings — indeed, the hon. and learned Member said the basis of the report had reference to the second term rentals in Ireland— and in the second place, to the immediate interests of two parties in these normal occupation holdings—namely, those who are in a position to sell under the Land Acts whom we often inaccurately term landlords, and the actual occupiers of the soil. It does but glance at the problem of congestion and at the position of those who have lost the right to have rents fixed and are under agreements; it does but glance at the due allocation of such land as may be available, and which must be most carefully and cautiously considered if the tenure of agricultural land in Ireland is to be saved from existing defects and safeguarded against their occurrence in future. I say it glances off these difficulties and also off the tangled mass of legal embarrassments, and again off the effect that any system of land purchase may have on the rights and expectations of encumbrancers and remainder-men. Again — and I speak in praise not criticism— the report of the conference avoids any semblance of dictation or of menace to this House, and the taxpayers represented in this House. On that score I would most warmly congratulate the authors of the report on maintaining what in diplomacy is called the "correct attitude" towards this House.

In all these matters this House will be called to judge; and it is right that all of us in this House should come to consider these matters in a judicial frame of mind, absolutely protected, as judges and juries are, from any antecedent attempt to deflect our judgment by persuasion or coerce it by menace. We must be free in this House to view the measure when it is produced, and to exercise our absolutely free arbitrament upon it, and decide whether it is a sound or unsound measure of policy, which should be accepted or rejected by the House. What then, I may be asked, is the value, in my opinion, of this report? This report has already, and for the time being—may it be for ever—accomplished a work the value of which can hardly be over estimated. It shows quite clearly what the majority—the large majority—of Irish landlords and of Irish tenants separately desire and are mutually ready to concede. It lays down, what is a valuable fact to have stated with precision and accuracy, the direction of two forces and those the most momentous which are involved in this complicated problem; and it proves that these two forces—the force of the landlord interest and the force of the tenants' interest—are not, as many have supposed and asserted, in diametrical opposition, but, on the contrary, that they yield a resultant which does not of necessity come into collision with any of the impediments or embarrassments that beset the problem of land purchase in Ireland. That is much, and that is new.

In the vexed history of a hundred years of conflict and disillusion we have had nothing like that before. It may almost be called a portent. If I said that when the people of Ireland opened their newspapers one morning and read this report they were agreeably surprised, I should be understating the case; they were astonished, they were exhilarated, they were shaken out of the mood of restless despondency and lifted to the rarer atmosphere of calm hope. I must, however, utter a word of warning. In the very suddenness, in the very magnitude of the popular impression created by that report, there is danger. There may be great danger that some interpretation has been placed upon it going altogether beyond the extreme verge of what is possible. A cold fit may follow a hot fit; and no one can contemplate without misgiving the application of violent alternations of temperature to an element so mercurial as Irish aspirations. Yet I would not end upon a note of despondency, because the despondency too long diffused through Ireland has been her greatest bane. I would end with a note which many would call sanguine. I would say, if, as I pray and believe, the spirit of good sense and good will which animates this report is maintained, as it will be by those who signed it, and is emulated, as it will be, I am sure, by this House, why, then, it is not idle to believe that the despondency which has for so long been diffused through all classes in Ireland will be dispersed, giving place to some measure of hope for all classes, and that measure of hope for all will, and must, carry with it a measure of charity and good will between all. If that be so—and may it be so—then Ireland will at last be placed in a position to acquire and lay truly those social foundations on which alone it is possible to rear the fabric of a comprehensive and healthy national life.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): We shall all agree in admiring the tone and temper with which the Chief Secretary has approached this difficult and embarrassing subject. We admired the eloquence, combined with caution, with which he described this momentous document. I, speaking for some of those around me, may be pardoned if I imitate the right hon. Gentleman in being cautious. When the Minister in charge of the ice raises the board marked "dangerous," those who are not responsible and who are awaiting his proposal may be excused from getting to close quarters with proposals to which my hon. and learned friend has drawn attention. The Chief Secretary is undoubtedly right in saying this is a situation which is absolutely new in the history of Ireland since the arrival of Strongbow on the Irish shore.

COL. SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): Hear, hear.

MR. MORLEY: I am glad to see the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh agrees fully with the Chief Secretary and myself in our view of this document. Think what a change has come over the scene since the old policy on the Irish benches was to get rid of the yoke of the landlord by making his position intolerable. To-day the policy is to get rid of that yoke, if yoke it be, by making his position tolerable.

I particularly value the phrase repeated by my hon. and learned friend who moved this Amendment, that this report and the Bill with which it is to some extent connected, must be regarded not as conferring a boon on one class or another in Ireland, but as a great act of State and national policy. That is the view with which I hope the whole dealing with a difficult situation will be undertaken by His Majesty's Government. It is lamentable—I am not going back into history—to think how the one great single industry of Ireland has been, if I may be pardoned for using the word, "bedevilled," by the levity and shortsightedness of Parliament after Parliament. It is perfectly clear that the right hon. Gentleman will, at all events, lend a sympathetic ear to the views expressed in the report. Of course, the whole House is well aware of what it is that produced the necessity for the report and for the proposals the Government are about to make. Everybody is aware that we have now got in Ireland two classes of tenants—one of those who by purchase pay a lower rent for a limited time, and another class of tenants who pay a higher rent apparently in perpetuity.

A great deal has been said of dual ownership. What we are talking about this afternoon has been produced by dual occupancy. The evils of dual occupancy are quite as great as those of dual ownership. I will not go through the report. I will not do more than touch the mere fringe of it. I am not quite sure that the House, the country, or the Press really draw the proper distinction which my hon. and learned friend drew between the two kinds of applications which are to be made to the British Treasury. One large and almost gigantic sum of money is to be loaned from the British Imperial Exchequer, but to be repaid in full. The other and smaller sum is asked to be given freely and not to be repaid. That, of course, introduces a completely new principle into all our dealings with Ireland, and makes it essential that we should look very closely at it. I should like this question to be reduced so far as we possibly can to figures. I shall not weary the House with many of them, but it is so important that we should be clear on the subject that I should like to mention them. As to the rental of Ireland, which is a figure much appealed to in all the discussions I see in Ireland and England,—deal with it as you may,—it is a very speculative figure. You cannot arrive at it for a great many reasons, which all who are familiar with the Irish land question will understand. Perhaps it is a disgrace to Irish Governments, and those with which I was concerned along with the rest, that they have not ascertained a proper authentic statement of the land rent of Ireland. I take it from a pretty careful observation of all the figures to which I have had access that the rental which you will have to deal with on the basis of second term rents is about £4,000,000 a year. My hon. friend the Member for South Tyrone, to whose manful battle for the Irish tenants a great debt is owing, has put the figure at £4,140,000, or something of that kind. Now the case is this—this is what is asked in the report: the landlords are to have a capital sum which at 3 per cent., with a deduction of 10 per cent. for the cost of collection, would still amount to £4,000,000. That, I think, is the problem. How are they to get the £4,000,000? Of course, if that was capitalised on the basis of the Report that would mean a sum, I am afraid, of £130,000,000. These are details we can go into afterwards. Now there is the position to be considered of the tenants. They are to have a 15 or 20 per cent. reduction. What will that mean? I make out that they pay now £4,000,000 on the second term rents. You deduct a fifth of that in order to give them the advantage of 20 per cent., and the result is that you are to receive from them, if this transaction is carried through, a sum of £3,200,000. Therefore, what you have to do is to fill up the gap between £3,200,000 and £4,000,000. That is a fair computation. The Government will have to decide, and this House will have to decide, as to whether the difference is to be a free grant. It is an amount, if capitalised, of £22,000,000, so that what we are asked for by the report is a free grant capitalised of about £22,000,000, and a possible liability of £100,000,000 of loan. It is always useful, when considering any proposal from the landlords, to bring their request to the test of figures. I submit, on the best information I have been able to get on the matter, that these figures are about correct. I make a few remarks about the figures. The first is that this liability, either free grant or loan, is not to fall upon us at once, because it will take years to work out this scheme between landlords and tenants. It is very common to hear people talk, when dealing with the Irish land question, of the two great land reformers whose names are often used by persons not very familiar with the actual nature of the case. But this is entirely different from any operations which are contemplated, or can be contemplated, in Ireland It took those two men more than twelve or fourteen years to get the great question of land reform carried out, and I do not believe that, if the present Chief Secretary remains in office for twelve years, even he will get entirely to the end of the great operation which the Report maps out for him. Therefore it is that the large sum I have mentioned will not fall upon us in the shape of a 2½d. income tax from the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his coming Budget. It will take an amount of time to examine holdings and to go over estates. It will not throw on us a burden of more than £50,000 a year. So much for that.

Then another point referred to by my hon. and learned friend was retrenchment. Of course, everybody at once fixes upon the Royal Irish Constabulary, but you will not get your retrenchment there immediately, and you would not economise if you did, because a great many of the men are in the prime of life, and if withdrawn they would retire on long service pensions. There is another favourite field of mine, if I had the power in Ireland, for retrenchment. It is the Irish judges. I am not speaking a word disrespectfully of any Irish judge, but there are twice too many of them. Their salaries amount to £64,000 a year, and each judge has registrars and others making a large sum indeed. I think you could make great retrenchment there. It has been said that the Land Commission might be reduced. I am not very sanguine of retrenchment there. But in the meantime, though those retrenchments will and must be slow, so also the demand will be slow. I shall not at all despair of the Chief Secretary being able to retrench in some way which will seriously and materially reduce the proposed free grant.

I shall refer to one other point, and one only. On the 12th February the Under Secretary made a speech in Dublin and used language which, I understand, has attracted great interest in Ireland. He referred to the danger to the purchaser after he has become owner of falling into the hands of the moneylender. In that speech he recapitulates in the language of a man who has had experience and observation in other systems of peasant proprietorships those dangers. He then says—I presume, speaking the mind of the Irish Government—that he should think ill of any proposed settlement which transferred the ownership and which did not safeguard the purchasers, though perhaps against their own will, against the moneylender, and against the many temptations in Ireland to sub-division. That is a portion, I presume, of the Bill which I shall at least look forward to with the liveliest interest. I have always thought —and I have been concerned in more than one Irish Land Bill—that Parliament commits a great error in giving all the benefits of State credit to a comparatively small and select class. I do not mean to say that the Irish tenant farmers are not something more than a class. They are, no doubt, the body of the Irish people, but still there is a large body outside of them in the towns—labourers and others. In 1886, when Mr. Gladstone brought forward a large Irish scheme dealing with the whole Irish question, one of the merits of that rejected policy was that an Irish authority was to take 18 per cent. interest on the whole amount of the advances to the annuitants. I would say to the Chief Secretary, with all humility, that I should particularly like to see in his proposals, if they are to be proposals, some element which would give an interest to the punctual payment of those annuities, and thus confer benefits not only on the present occupiers of land in Ireland but on the Irish community at large. I fully agree with the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, who has better knowledge than I have, that if the Government or any party of Gentlemen in this House think that the settlement of this Irish land question, in connection with which, no doubt, the Imperial Treasury is probably about to be asked to undertake new liabilities, will extinguish the Irish question, I do not believe it will. You will still have a great number of men who will have an interest in keeping alive the same flame and spirit of nationality which has made the question of self-government a burning question in this country for a great many years past.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON said he did not take any part in the Land Conference in Ireland, although he was invited to do so. He thought he knew so perfectly what the views were of those who met there, and that on many points they were so acutely opposed, that he did not think his presence at that Conference would add any particular value to its deliberations. He did not think that the Conference would lead to any particularly good result. He now admitted — and all had to confess that they sometimes might be wrong —that the Conference had, on the whole, a very good effect. The landlords had certainly no right to complain of the deliberations of the Conference. If he had been told in the immediate past that he, as an Irish landowner, or any other Irish landowner, could apply for a character to the Member for Cork or the Member for South Tyrone, he should certainly have refrained from doing so. So changeable was the Irish mind, perhaps he might say so open was the Irish mind to learn the truth, that the outcome of the deliberations in the conference was that it was necessary to place the tenants in possession of their farms, and necessary to buy up the landlords at such a price as would enable them to live in their native land, and to form a fortifying and solidifying element in Irish society in which they were told in the immediate past that they were a destructive element. He thought that the landlords had every right to be satisfied with the results of the conference. The conference has brought before the minds of the British people the fact that, for the first time in the history of Ireland, the Irish tenants and Irish landlords were perfectly ready to come to an agreement. But it was very easy for a conference sitting in Dublin to arrive at that conclusion, and to offer to the tenants their holdings, and to the landlords a certain number of years purchase—thirty-three years—for their Irish lands. But they had to persuade the British House of Commons, and, above all, the new Irish landlord—that well-known personage called John Bull—that his new tenants were chiefly peaceable and well-to-do, whom he might accept without fear as tenants. Now, were the Irish tenants at the present moment thrifty and prosperous, and such as they could recommend to the British Parliament as suitable and worthy of acceptance? In times gone by he had often contradicted the statements of the hon. Members opposite as to the condition of the Irish tenants. It had been their habit to draw a very dismal and unsatisfactory picture of their condition. They were described as miserable, wretched, ragged, and almost starving, but he had brought statistics before the House to prove that the Irish tenants, so far from being retrogressive, ragged and unthrifty, had been steadily improving almost by leaps and bounds—statements which had been generally received by hon. Gentlemen opposite with jeers and laughter. Now he said that it ought to be the object of every Irishman who supported this great measure to show that these statistics were accurate, and that these tenants were three times as wealthy as they were forty years ago. He did not think that any hon. Gentleman opposite would, under present conditions, contradict what he said. It would be a very strong argument on his part, and for the landlords who advocated this great change, and he was sure it would be on the part of the Chief Secretary to use when he brought in his Bill to the British Treasury, and to the Government, and to Parliament, who were to become the landlords of these tenants, that the latter had proved by their past history that they were thriving and prosperous and need not be a national danger to the British State. He thought this was a remarkable opportunity for undertaking the operation, which he believed the Government would succeed in carrying out, if it were well and generously done. The House and hon. Gentlemen opposite might not be aware that there had been no fall in agricultural prices in Ireland since 1886. In fact nearly all the main products on which Ireland depended—cattle, butter, pork, were at the present moment commanding higher prices than in 1886. There was every reason, therefore, why the tenants should be in a prosperous condition, so long as they conducted their affairs with industry and attention. This had resulted from land legislation, which had led to reductions in rents, which were half they paid a number of years ago. Therefore he said that the improved condition of the Irish tenants, not the miserable, unfortunate, discontented creatures described by the hon. Members opposite, and sometimes by the Member for South Tyrone, but the man who could pay his way, as was proved by the manner in which he paid his instalments under the Land Purchase Act, removed a great difficulty out of the road of the Chief Secretary. He agreed with the hon. Member for Waterford that it had never so strongly come to the front as now that Ireland was in such a good condition of peace and prosperity, and so ready to accept a gift of this kind, not only for its own benefit but for the security of the State. If the Chief Secretary neglected the opportunity he now had, after arousing the desires and natural aspirations of the people, and disappointed them, it would be a crime. From the remarks of the right hon. Member for Montrose, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman and those who thought with him were inclined to be niggardly in dealing with this question. He had always held that buying out the landlords would not be done for the sake of the tenants, or for the sake of the landlords, but to secure for Ireland peace and prosperity and contentment, which was of material assistance to the general security of the British Empire, and therefore, as it was a State purchase, the State ought to pay for it. They ought to do it fairly and generously. Landlords were as much Irishmen as hon. Members opposite. All they asked was that they should be paid in such a way that they could live in their native land. Therefore he said that if this Bill secured that object, they would do a great deal to finish once and for ever a great and difficult question, which would bring about the peace of Ireland. He was glad that the Amendment had been brought forward by the hon. Member for Waterford, because it enabled the Chief Secretary to hear their views as to what the Bill should contain. Now, the Bill ought to induce the tenants to buy and the landlords to sell. As long as the Land Courts remained, as long as the Land Commission reduced the rents, the tenants would have no inducement to buy. The tenant would have no reason to buy at all, because if he waited long enough he would get his land for nothing. He knew of a case that happened the other day in Kerry, where the rent was reduced 45 per cent., and where the tenant sold the farm a few days afterwards for forty-seven years' purchase. If they still allowed the tenants of Ireland to see before them the prospect of getting their rents reduced from 20 per cent. to 30 per cent. every successive fifteen years, they would take away from the tenants a great inducement to sell. As far as the landlords were concerned, the incentive to sell was very naturally so great, and the letting of land in Ireland was so undesirable, that they required very little inducement to accept any fair offer. One thing, therefore, the Bill ought to contain, should be a provision causing the action of the Land Commission in Ireland to cease. That would get rid of extra expense, and would give such an incentive to the Irish tenants to buy as would make the Bill run. Although he was opposed to hon. Gentlemen opposite on political questions, he believed that they desired the welfare of Ireland; and he thought that they would also admit that from his point of view he desired the same, although they differed as to methods. He was sure they would believe him when he said that realising, as he did, that a great opportunity had arisen, which might never in their lifetime or in the lifetime of their children occur again, he was absolutely at one with them in striving to induce the Government to carry such a measure as would settle this long-vexed question, which had undoubtedly caused a great deal of heartburning and misery in Ireland, and he hoped that they and he, and all Irishmen, of all ranks and creeds, would see carried a measure which would bring about the permanent happiness and prosperity of their native land.

*MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire) said that, remarkable as was the debate which had occupied the previous two days, he thought the House would agree that the present debate was still more remarkable, and, if possible, still more portentous. They seemed to have issued out of tempestuous and stormy weather into a period of bright and brilliant sunshine. He was not of those who believed in placing too great hope in the permanence of sunshine; and he agreed entirely with the wise counsel which fell from his right hon. friend the Member for Montrose Burghs in his speech, which, as nearly as possible, defined his own attitude on this question, namely, not to be too sanguine. They might now settle, or think they had settled, the land question; but let them not believe that they would thereby get rid of Irish affairs. Much more would remain to be done. Nevertheless when they had a period of sunshine it afforded a great opportunity. Nothing gratified him more than the eloquent and sympathetic assurance contained in the speech of the Chief Secretary that he was aware of the greatness of the opportunity and of the responsibility which rested on his shoulders. It might be asked what the situation really amounted to, and what had been gained by the conferences and agreements which had taken place. He should say that they had gained two things. They had gained a consensus of agreement upon a definite principle for the very first time; and they had reduced subsequent questions to matters of figures, which might be very important, but still were matters of figures; and which could be discussed as such without bringing in extraneous controversies on matters of principle. That seemed to him to be of the first importance. For many years hon. Members representing the majority of constituencies in Ireland had announced that the landlord system was a great evil, but they had not been able to bring forward any proposal which had been regarded as practical by the great mass of the people of England. On the other hand, they had a minority in Ireland and a great many people in England, who said that they would not get rid of the landlord system on any terms. Now there was for the first time agreement on the part of the great majority of the Irish Members to treat the Irish landlords not only justly but generously; and, on the other hand, an agreement on the part of the Irish landlords to recognise the situation, and make way for a large measure of settlement. To what did they owe that situation? He thought it was in a great measure due to the new attitude towards local affairs introduced by the Local Government Act. He did not believe that the blessings of that Act had yet been fully recognised. It brought people together, and brought them to see things more from more than one point of view than was formerly the case. The speech of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, who spoke in very great agreement with his colleagues for other Irish constituencies representing different views, showed that the time had come when the Irish people were beginning to look much more closely at the interests of Ireland as a whole, and less at the disputes which had separated political parties so long. It seemed to him that the great principle which the rubbing together of minds brought about by the Local Government Act and other causes had resulted in, was the principle which was recognised in the deliberations of the conference and its conclusions, namely, that it was advantageous to carry out land purchase on such just terms that the Irish landlords would have an inducement to sell, while the tenants would have the maximum of advantage in purchasing.

The next question was the question of price. As his right hon. friend had said, price was a matter which was apt to be not much considered in a happy period such as the present. That the price would have to be a substantial one, he himself had very little doubt; and, in connection with it, there were two very serious matters they had to consider. As to the grant, if it were kept within a moderate compass, it would be very well worth making; but the other part, the loan operation, would involve a very large use of the national credit. He saw no other way of carrying it out, except by the Government making a further issue of Consols. That might be very necessary and proper; but unless they could give the utmost assurance to investors as to the security, they would run the risk of having to borrow at a disadvantageous price, and that would tend to raise the price of things generally throughout the country. While he did not say that the operation should not be performed, it was their duty to regard it with the very closest scrutiny; and to his mind the scrutiny should be more careful as regarded the loan than as regarded the grant. He recognised very strongly the force of the observation of his right hon. friend the Member for Montrose Burghs, who showed that the operation would be gradual. At the present time, he thought that power still remained under the last Ashbourne Act to issue Consols. The transactions in which they would engage would be transactions to which they were accustomed, and from which they might conceivably learn that they might be carried out without any substantial loss to the Exchequer. He should be quite happy in his mind as to that, were it not for the magnitude of the sum to be dealt with; and, speaking for himself, he wished to maintain an attitude of reserve on the financial part of the proposals until he knew what they were likely to be. As to the lump sum to be granted, he knew that a great many people would say that it was another dole to the landlord. He did not take that view in the least. When a great industrial concern, such as a railway company, had to carry out new works, the directors went to the shareholders for the money. The shareholders might ask why their funds should be further encroached upon for, for instance, the widening of a bridge; and the answer was, because in every sort of indirect way an insufficient bridge caused in an imperceptible fashion great waste. Nothing was more striking in Irish government than the evidence everywhere of the wastefulness of the machinery, and of the economy that might be effected. If a well considered scheme of land purchase came before the House, he would not only vote for it on general grounds but that for the reason that he saw in it real economy if it were properly carried out. This matter could not be properly discussed on the meagre figures before the House. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford had not given many figures, and the right hon. Gentleman opposite had given figures a wide berth and had said the proposals of the Conference were somewhat meagre. Figures after all were the work of the Government, and the business of the House was to consider what the Government put forward. When the Government, with the aid of financial experts, had really got to the bottom of the matter and enabled them to go into the figures which were the only safe materials upon which to judge and come to a decision, if it happened that the financial grant was something of a reasonable amount, he would not be disposed to disapprove that the sum should be given for the purpose of facilitating the buying out of a large number of landlords. And he was not deterred in the matter because of what was said by the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh, which he cordially believed, namely, that the great mass of Irish landowners did not intend to leave Ireland, but to live their lives there.

One of the greatest things about the conference had been that it had shown that the landlords had been able to take part in the government of Ireland, and might be expected and be enabled to take a greater part in the future. Therefore, this question ought to be approached, not in the spirit of this money going into the pockets of somebody who would walk away with it, but in the spirit of providing new machinery which would get rid of friction and influence affairs of Ireland in the direction of peace, and thereby enable the cost of government in Ireland to be substantially diminished. Both the nation and the House owed a very great deal to those, such as Mr. Talbot Crosbie and Captain Shawe Taylor, who had brought about this conference. The work done by the hon. Member for South Tyrone had not been sufficiently widely appreciated. It might be that his proposals were not exactly the proposals of the Conference, but he and others who had worked indefatigably to bring about this laying of heads together, which had resulted in these proposals, deserved all praise. It might be when the figures were worked out that they would be too big to take up—he sincerely hoped they would not—it might be that there would be great difficulty in details which would disclose themselves in the Bill. He had been struck with the extraordinary circumstance that the number of small holders in Ireland did not tend to diminish, notwithstanding the tendency to raise them to a state of greater prosperity. The case of these small holders, many of them under an acre, would not be met by the moderate proposals put forward by the conference. Be that as it might, the hopeful sense that one had, that at last they had got to a stage when those matters were no longer matters of broad principle, but had been advanced a stage and become matter of financial detail, was a thing on which they were to be congratulated. If that were true, though it left the final problem unsolved, they had smoothed the way and got another stage towards the solution of the problem. He had voted for every Land Bill that had been brought forward during the eighteen years he had been a Member of the House, and he hoped he should find it easy to give a vote, or at any rate support, to the Motion the right hon. Gentleman was about to introduce under such happy auspices.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork) said the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had done the Irish Party an injustice in supposing that they expected him to make any disclosure of the Bill he was about to introduce. The Amendment of his hon. friend was not in the least meant to force the hand of the right hon. Gentleman. They found no fault with the Government for weighing the question well before they introduced this measure, because they knew a great deal would depend upon who had the last word. The right hon. Gentleman had undoubtedly kept his secret well, in fact rather too well, but this was too solemn an occasion to make any criticism on the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman; they must wait until they had the Bill before them. They had heard many speeches from high quarters, and one from the highest quarter, which had raised unquestionably the expectations of the people of Ireland, but the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that day had to some extent reminded them, if any reminder was necessary, that theirs was a nation of disappointments, and that they ought never to consider themselves in more danger than when they were sanguine of success. They would watch and wait, and the criticism from the Irish Benches, if it was to come, would not be hasty. They were far from desirous of criticising the right hon. Gentleman; difficulties there might be, but with the Irish Members it was difficult to conceive why there should be difficulties. It was due to the Irish Members to say that the remarks of Ministers had been a clear indication that there would be no narrow or niggard proposition from the section which might involve the Liberal Party as well as everybody else. He ventured to say with the utmost confidence, whatever might be the result of this controversy among the great mass both of the tenants and the landlords, there was no doubt whatever as to what this settlement meant. All the difficulties, such as they were, were centred in the one financial point of the extremely limited expenditure, namely, the difference between a fair market price to the tenants, and the compulsory price of the landlord.

The hon. and learned Member for Waterford had told the House frankly, and not by way of menace, that any attempt to cast upon the shoulders of the tenants that extra price would mean the instant collapse of the entire arrangement, because unconditional State help to that extent was the corner-stone of the conference. Of the few hundreds of thousands that it would cost, at least one third would be covered by the saving on the Land Commission, which would disappear. To Irishmen it seemed almost inconceivable that Englishmen of any Party, when they were without a doubt within one short step of peace and reconciliation, should stop short, and by such niggardliness in the midst of many prodigalities, in order to effect a saving of a few hundred thousand pounds to this tremendously rich Empire, run the serious risk of confuting the promise in the King's Speech, and falsifying all the happy auguries of the Lord Lieutenant, the Chief Secretary, and the Under-Secretary, and reduce the representatives of the people once more to the alternatives of either rejecting altogether a bad Bill, or using an ungracious and half-hearted measure as a leverage for new agitation and fresh legislation. It was not pleasant to think that such folly was even possible, but unfortunately Ireland's past history forbade the rejection of the idea. Parliament and England had not yet realised all that the Land Conference meant.

It had been amusing recently to note the innocent surprise of people in England to find that Irishmen were not bereft of all reason or human feeling towards the landlords. Fighting, as they had been, on the weaker side, with few weapons and against terrible odds, they had not been able to afford to indulge in the luxury of exchanging compliments with their opponents, nor could they even yet. But it showed what a perfect tragedy of muddle and misunderstanding this poor world of ours is, because during all the twenty-three years of the land war in which they had been at one another's throats, there never was a moment when even the most extreme were not just as ready as now for a sincere and honest peace and reconciliation upon the terms to which the landlord and tenant classes had agreed. The tenants' representatives had been told by some of their critics that they had allowed themselves to be hypnotised by the influence of Lord Dunraven. If so, the hypnotism was of a singularly retro-active character, because it began a quarter of a century before they set eyes on Lord Dunraven. The present was really the first occasion in Irish history when the two classes had been cordially acting together on a footing of equality, and possibly the co-operation would not be confined to the land question. They had hit upon a basis, not merely of sentiment, but of common interest, so genuine, that of the 4,250,000 of people in Ireland, there were probably not 10,000, other than land agents, clerks in the rent office, and place-hunters, who did not concur with the spirit and substance of the report.

Another very remarkable feature of the present situation was that the Government were for the first time dealing directly with the masses of the people in Ireland. They were dealing directly with the Unionist farmers of the North, who unquestionably looked up to and trusted the hon. Member for South Tyrone as their representative; they were dealing also, directly and for the first time, with the active forces of disaffection in Ireland, through representatives who could speak for themselves, having taken their part in the struggle, and had no recantation to make. One of the things which made some representatives of the landlords shrink from the notion of the conference, was undoubtedly the fact that they would have to meet men whom they disliked and disapproved of, who, only the other day, had been engaged in a desperate conflict with the Government, and who possibly would be similarly engaged again if the present truce broke down. But it was just the fact that it spoke for the United Irish League, as well as for the landowners and the Unionist farmers, which gave importance to the conference.

There was nothing more remarkable in the reception of the report than the fact that in the very districts, such as Mayo, Clare, Cork, and Sligo, which were the despair of Dublin Castle, the cream of the fighting men of disaffection had accepted almost to a man this treaty for a peaceful reconciliation. They had, however, in this agreement gone to the utmost limit of generosity to their opponents. In every county and district council, and in the branches of the United Irish League in over 1,200 parishes, the terms had been endorsed with an unanimity unsurpassed in history upon any great question. Such a chance had never before been offered to any Government. But as the hon. Member for Waterford frankly stated, although agrarian troubles could be permanently removed on the terms of this report, it would not settle the question of Home Rule. On the contrary, one of the recommendations of the compromise to many men was the belief that it would remove the last serious obstacle to Home Rule by creating an absolutely united Ireland. They might be right or they might be wrong, but they believed that a settlement of the Home Rule question would be an infinitely easier matter than it was for them in the Land Conference to arrive at a settlement of the land question. They believed that they might just as well try to extract oxygen from the Irish air as to extinguish the spirit of Irish nationalism. He could not conceive why they should try to do this.

It had been said that if the land question was settled that would be the end of Home Rule and mercenary agitators. The mercenary agitators were willing to take their chance. Let them settle this question upon its own merits. Menaces had been spoken of, but they all knew that when he menaced he made no mistake about it. It was only fair, however, to bring the right hon. Gentleman face to face with this fact, that he would find in Irishmen, whether Unionist or Nationalist, unanimity in agreeing absolutely that the right hon. Gentleman could get rid of the land troubles undoubtedly and unquestionably upon the terms agreed at the conference, and that he had better never have touched the question at all if there was going to be any attempt to juggle with those terms. There was an honest and a dishonest way of meeting the report of that conference. He did not for a moment assume that the right hon. Gentleman contemplated yielding to the suggestions made to him, but he believed it would have been better not to have promised any Land Bill at all than, for the sake of a niggardly saving, to ruin the prospects of this measure. Compared with the money squandered in South Africa, their demand was a mere drop in the bucket, but if the Bill was introduced without this demand being conceded, the measure would be the signal for fresh agitation, and instead of completing a series of land reform it would complete a series of follies and failures. All he could say was that if the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues, and if British Members of both Parties in that House were only equally willing to take up their very light share of the burden, he ventured to say that deep and heartfelt would be the satisfaction of Ireland, and he was quite sure that in that House and the Empire they would never have better reason for rejoicing.

*MR. J. GORDON (Londonderry, S.) said they had just listened to one of the most hopeful and useful discussions that had taken place in the House of Commons for many a long year. They all had their differences, but they from Ireland came to the House now, agreed as to the main features of what they asked the House to concede to their country. They were now on the eve of new legislation in reference to the land question in Ireland, legislation which would apply to three-fourths or more of the industry of the island in which they lived. The Chief Secretary would bring forward his measure, and, when he did so, hon. Members would have to put before the House the views of the different sections of the House, whether they came from Ireland or not. One thing he wished to remind the Government of. Different parties had taken different views as to the way in which the transfer of land from landlord to tenant was to take place. He knew that was not the time to discuss such a question, but they had now before the House a report in which both parties, landlords and tenants, so far as they were represented, had agreed to two great principles which Ministers had enunciated in that House. One principle which they had agreed to was that dual ownership in land should cease. The next principle, which had been the policy of the Ministers of the Crown, and which had, at all events for the present, been accepted by both parties in Ireland, was that the cessation of dual ownership should be brought about on terms mutually agreed between themselves and subject to conditions which were mentioned. Those were no light matters to have been settled by the landlords and tenants.

It was perfectly true that at that conference only two parties were present, and that the third party was essential to complete the conference in order to enable the whole matter to be carried out. That third party was the British taxpayer. They did not want to shirk the question which the hon. Member for Waterford had put in the forefront, namely, that without the aid of the British taxpayer and financial assistance from the British Treasury no Bill could hope to be successful or to be carried out in a way which would satisfy either of the parties. Therefore, it was well that the Chief Secretary should have that matter brought before him, and he thought it was particularly fortunate that they should have had an expression of opinion from the opposite side of the House, not essentially binding the Opposition to the amount which might be granted, but at all events expressing the willingness of hon. Gentlemen opposite to agree to any reasonable concession of a financial kind which was necessary for the purpose of carrying out the Bill on the lines of the report of the conference. After all that was the root of the matter, for they wanted to get the consent of the third party to this agreement. They wanted the Chief Secretary for Ireland to see where he stood, and to know that he would get support and encouragement from every side of the House if he dealt with this matter on broad and generous principles. After all, what they asked for was not such a large or extravagant sum. It had been put forward in the newspapers as if they were to get some enormous sum of money handed over to them at once, but that was an entire delusion. The British House of Commons ought to know that those figures were most misleading. He thought the largest sum ever likely to be required was what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose had shown would in his opinion be necessary. It was not necessarily intended to be a handing over of some large sum of money, but it was intended that in some way or another the money which the British taxpayer would not get back again should be applied for the purpose of settling this great question in Ireland.

The magnitude of the question itself was sufficient reason why such aid should be granted by the British Treasury. Ireland might make a strong case on the lines which had only been more or less glanced at by the hon. and learned Member who had moved this Amendment. But without touching on that question, there was one thing which, to his mind, would appeal strongly to the ordinary, average, fair-minded taxpayer of this country, and that was that even though they might not individually pay more in taxation than the individual taxpayer in England, yet from the necessities of the case the great spending Departments spent most of their money in England and not in Ireland. After all, the British people ought not to look upon such a concession as a mere gift. Apart from all these questions, if they settled these differences between landlord and tenant, and put an end to the continuous lawsuits and ill-feeling between the parties, and enabled industries to be carried on, and introduced conditions under which the tenants could make the most out of their land, he thought they would be getting an ample return for any sum of money which was likely to be required. He did not want to go into controversial matters, but rather to deal with those on which they were all agreed. The great central difficulty was in connection with the question of getting sufficient money to enable the Bill to be successfully carried out. He thought that could be done. He hoped and believed that the Chief Secretary would be strong enough and courageous enough to base his Bill on sufficient pecuniary assistance. He did not agree with the hon. Member for Cork in his views as to the effect of such legislation upon the question of Home Rule. He thought the Bill would largely tend to lessen the clamour for Home Rule. Leaving that question out of consideration for the moment, if any hon. Member should ask, "Is this to end all the demands, is Ireland to be satisfied now, and are we to have no more requests for assistance?" he would reply, "Deal with each question as it arises, and as it should be dealt with—fairly, temperately, justly, and, if necessary, generously. Do not mind too much what is to come afterwards." He had no doubt that from time to time questions would arise, in Ireland just as in other parts of the Empire, but when they do arise they should be dealt with calmly and fairly, and without any suggestion that simply because they were questions from Ireland there must be something wrong about them.

They had before them now the report of the Land Conference containing what he thought might be taken as the unanimous opinion of the country. If the Chief Secretary framed a Bill closely approaching the lines of that Report, for the purpose of carrying out what was indicated in the Gracious Speech of the Sovereign, he would have done something that would put an end to the necessity for land legislation for Ireland. Let the request for this monetary grant for Ireland not be misunderstood. He was one of a large number of people in Ireland who were not directly interested in land, either as landlord or tenant, who were simply British taxpayers, but who had the advantage of living on the spot and of knowing the necessity for something of this kind being done. He did not think he was exceeding the limit to which he might fairly go when he said that the vast majority of people like himself in Ireland, who were not directly interested as landlords or tenants, were perfectly willing to put their hands in their pockets and contribute with their fellow taxpayers in these countries to any reasonable extent for the purpose of having this matter ended between the two parties. In dealing with this question it was important that their fellow-subjects in England and Scotland should understand how much was to be gained in return. When they did so he was quite sure they would have little hesitation in supporting the Chief Secretary in any scheme he might bring forward. Expectations and hopes had not unnaturally been raised all over Ireland. The people had a fond hope that a measure would be carried through this session which would put an end to all the difficulties, quarrelling, and litigation which existed between landlord and tenant.

That could not be done alone by the Irish Members, but by the goodwill and common sense of the Members of this House representing the two great political parties from England and Scotland. He hoped they would give the Chief Secretary their support; and he believed that the Chief Secretary, if he were assured of substantial support, would deal generously with the question, and would produce a measure which, so far as human foresight could provide, would be a measure of finality.

SIR EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick): The right hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh said in the course of his speech that he assumed the Chief Secretary and the Government have a Bill in incubation on the Irish land question. That being so, it might be useful to them to have from as many Members as possible this afternoon an indication of what their view on that Irish land question may be. I am prepared, as far as I can, to make them a present of my view. I say as far as I can, because, without any proposal before us, we must necessarily speak with great reservation. I am not prepared to pledge myself this afternoon to any individual proposal; but what I rise to endeavour to do is to present, as far as possible, the spirit in which I will approach the consideration of any proposal which the Government may have to bring before the House. I will not attempt to deal with the Irish land question. Everybody who has listened to the debate has seen what the delicate point in the matter is. The delicate point is whether the Government are to consider themselves bound—or, at any rate, justified—to introduce into any land purchase proposals they may make to this House something more than a loan, something in the nature of a free grant. That is the point to which I should like to address myself. Let me first put the political question out of the way. I have heard this Irish land question advocated in this House on the ground that it would do away with political difficulties in Ireland. I entirely agree with the hon. and learned Member for Waterford that we must discuss this question without prejudice to the development of political questions in Ireland. I do not believe it is possible—and if it were possible I would not make the attempt—to make any dealings with Irish land a sort of back-door by which we might afterwards plead that we had escaped from obligations to meet fairly any political demands that were made upon us by Ireland. We will deal with these demands on their merits when they are presented. All I wish to make clear is this, that I entirely agree that, even if our deliberations result in a satisfactory settlement of the Irish land purchase question, none of us have a right to express surprise or disappointment if we find we still have to meet and consider demands for Irish self-government. Let me, therefore, put that on one side.

Well, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary must excuse me if I follow him in dealing with his speech with a certain amount of reserve. I listened to it with great pleasure, but I would treat his speech as he treated the Irish Land Conference. If I were to say that his speech was full of good sense and good feeling it might be taken that I was pledging myself to support the Bill he has now in incubation; I will therefore content myself with saying it was a remarkable speech. I will also say the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Waterford was a remarkable speech. But the two speeches taken together are more remarkable than either taken separately. And the conclusions of the Irish Land Conference are remarkable. As the Chief Secretary told us, some of us who do not read the Irish newspapers, or, for the matter of that, the British newspapers, may have our suspicions as to how far we are on solid ground in relying on the conclusions arrived at by the Land Conference in Ireland as being such as to have the permanent support of both parties to the conference throughout the country in Ireland. I believe that they are remarkable, and that they ought to have permanent results. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Waterford has said they are on sound foundations. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh has taken the same view. He said there is something sound and permanent. I understand the Chief Secretary, in saying they were remarkable, to take the same view. My right hon. friend the Member for Montrose also looks upon them as important. If that be so, we have to ask ourselves—Do they provide an opportunity, such as no British Government has ever yet had, of dealing with the Irish land question; are we bound, or, if we are bound, are we justified in going to the length of a grant, an annual grant, from the Imperial Exchequer in order to enable them to take advantage of that opportunity?

During the last two nights we have been expressing with all our power the need for retrenchment in the cost of our defences. This afternoon we have had to deal with the question of whether or not we are going to encourage the Government in incurring extra expense in another direction. There may be a little dialectical inconvenience in the juxtaposition of the two debates, but I do not think it is a real argumentative inconvenience. We have been thinking in millions for the last two days; we are asked now to consider this question with a provisional figure in our minds of a few hundred thousands. I think we are justified if we consider that the situation in Ireland really needs a grant of that kind, and that a grant of that kind will have the effect which some hon. Members represent that it will have, in spite of anything we have said lately about retrenchment, in urging the Government to take this matter into consideration. I might add to the simile which the Prime Minister used last night, and say, Suppose a member of a household has come to the conclusion that the household expenses are far too great, if in one day he uses his utmost to impress on the household that the wine bill must be cut down by £1, he is perfectly justified in saying the next day that the bill for bread may be increased by half-a-crown. That is the sort of relation between the two debates. Now, is there justification not merely for an Imperial credit, but for an Imperial grant in order to enable a scheme of land purchase to be carried out? First of all, will there be any return for that grant? Of course, if there is a saving in the expense of the government of Ireland there will be a return. My right hon. friend the Member for Montrose has told us that there was a possibility of a saving in regard to the Irish Constabulary, but he also told us that it would be some time before it came into effect, because there would be pensions to be paid. But provided that there was a prospect of a saving, even if it be deferred, and even supposing that the saving is very small, how much more does that mean than can be measured in direct money value; how much more with reg rd to the direct social condition of Ireland? That is one element of consideration to be set against any costly expenditure.

Another point is that whatever loss the Exchequer may incur must be taken as a set-off against any claim arising from Ireland in respect to the financial relations. I do not mean a complete set-off, but it must be taken into account. Then, to go beyond purely material considerations and dealing with the spirit in which we ought to approach the question—admitting that it is very unfortunate that the Irish land question should apparently be at a deadlock unless there is some grant from the Exchequer—have we no responsibility in the matter? Well, Sir, I feel that successive British Governments for generations have had a responsibility for the intolerable manner in which the land system has been wrought in Ireland. And if that is so, then I agree with the right hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh that we are bound to go a little beyond purely economical considerations in this matter, and to consider it in no niggardly spirit. Moreover, there is present to my mind this further consideration, although I would not enlarge upon it. I believe that while Ireland will never be a separate country, she will always be a separate community. Then, the contrast between what has been the loss of that separate community in past generations while we have been extending and increasing I will not enlarge upon, because it would carry me too far; but it does affect the spirit in which I think British representatives and electors should approach this question. But what is a grant of this kind if it should be given? Some say it is a grant to the Irish landlords. That is not really my view. It is the essential price you will have to pay for bringing about a voluntary arrangement of the Irish land question. I am convinced that something will be needed to bridge over the gap, and this grant will be the essential something which is necessary to bring the two parties to the scheme together by voluntary arrangement. And what alternative have we to voluntary arrangement? First, there is the alternative to leave the thing alone. I heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary last session on the present condition of the Irish land question, and I am as convinced as he is that it is impossible to leave things alone. One phrase I remember was that the state of things in regard to Irish land was such that a delay of justice meant a denial of justice; but there is no prospect that there can be improvement, so far as I can see, unless there is some radical change in the system. What other alternative is there? There is the alternative of a great compulsory scheme of land purchase at a price fixed by the State. Of course that is an alternative, but I think any Member of this House who rejects this voluntary arrangement, and says he is not prepared to go to the extent of a moderate grant to carry out a voluntary arrangement, and thinks he is in a position to tell the Irish Government and the Irish Members that he sees a reasonable prospect of carrying out a great compulsory scheme —I believe he is playing a poor part in public affairs.

I have said so much to prove the spirit in which I would approach the question. I must return again to the speech of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh, when he asked us not to be niggardly in this matter. I am certainly hopeful that the House of Commons and the British electors will not be niggardly, but it is dangerous and delicate ground; and we must rely on the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh, and the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, to exercise their influence, as far as they can, with their friends and those whom they represent, to see that the gap between the two streams is as far as possible bridged. And I must say this by way of caution—that they, too, must do their utmost to reduce the gap in the bridge to the smallest possible dimensions. If they propose what is too high a price as the purchase price of Irish land, involving a draft on the Exchequer which seems to this country to be made unduly high, and too high a price to be given to the owners of land, I think they would very much prejudice their scheme. But though that is delicate and dangerous ground, it must be borne in mind that we, on this side of the House, cannot pledge ourselves until we see the Government proposals. I would say this afternoon that so far as the figures put provisionally before the House are concerned, should the Government Land Purchase Bill contain a provision of this kind to bridge over the gap between what the tenants and the landlords of Ireland will take into consideration, then, on principle, it should be no bar to the arrangement proposed. The right hon. Member for Haddington and I have supported every land purchase proposal made in the House of Commons since 1885. I do not know what the Government proposal will be, but it is my desire, and it is my hope, when their Bill is introduced, that we shall be able to maintain that record, in regard to Irish Land Purchase, unbroken.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said he fully agreed with the hon. Member for South Derry at the opening of his speech, when he declared that this was a most suggestive debate. It was the most suggestive debate on Irish affairs he had ever listened to in the House of Commons. It was suggestive for many reasons. First of all, it was highly suggestive because of the reception which the Irish demand had received from the representatives of British constituencies. To have the right hon. Member for Montrose, the right hon. Member for Berwick, and the right hon. Member for Haddington coming forward in the spirit they had displayed was not only suggestive, but satisfactory in the highest degree. Then the debate had been suggestive because of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. It was quite true that the right hon. Gentleman skirted the question quite as successfully as the authors of the Land Conference report had done.

He admitted the right hon. Gentleman's difficulties were quite as great as their own. Anyone could understand what the difficulties were of the right hon. Gentleman in the position in which he was placed, and he no doubt realised the difficulties of the authors of the Land Conference report. The right hon. Gentleman had said that these gentlemen had skirted many of the great issues involved. He was not complaining of that. It was quite true. But just think of that meeting in the Dublin Mansion House on those six days on which they were gathered together. Why, many of them had never met before save in fierce conflict. Just look at the subject they had to deal with. It was complicated with difficulties and bound up with all the passions of centuries. That was the position that those of them who met on that fateful morning were in. The wonder was that they should have agreed. He confessed that he went from his own residence to the Mansion House convinced that they should probably agree on a series of general resolutions; but that they should agree on something like a score of propositions which covered the essence of the whole question, was a thing he never conceived of when he entered the door of the Mansion House; and which very few people in Ireland believed possible. He must say this—that he thought they owed a great deal of the success of that conference to the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork. That hon. Member and he had fought many a battle inside and outside this House. That hon. Member held the seat which he now held and took from him, and they had scarcely ever sheathed the sword since that day, and, but for the moderation shown by the man who had the hardest row to hoe in the whole business—but for his moderation they never could have achieved that success which had not only impressed that House and Ireland, but had impressed the Irish people wherever they were to-day.

In many respects the whole question was one of finance. If the House of Commons could get over that bridge the question was settled for all time. The conference had first of all to consider the case of the tenant. The Landowners' Convention desired that the basis of purchase should be on present rents. The conference decided unanimously that the basis of purchase should be on second term rents, and the concession made by the landlords in that was no small matter, because the difference between first and second term rents, so far as it had been fixed, was a difference of 22 per cent. Were the tenants to buy at the second term rents? That they held to be impossible. They were assuming great responsibilities, and assuming them alone. They had to face a probable increase of foreign competition, a probable fall in prices, a certain rise in the cost of labour, and a certain rise in the rates of the country. They had to look all these facts in the face, and they stipulated for and secured that the terminal annuity to be paid by the tenant purchaser should be from 15 to 25 per cent. less than the second term rent. The landlords came to be next considered. The landlords had a statutory right to the second term rent. It could not be taken from them for the next fifteen years. And if this question was to be settled within a reasonable time, it was evident that they should look the fact fairly in the face, and come to a conclusion in harmony with the matter, and that accounted for the terms that had to be offered to the landlords. They had to be induced to sell—that was the plain English of the whole matter. It was no use on the part of the tenants agreeing to any report that would not constitute in itself an inducement for the landlords to sell. That was the real reason why the landlords' terms were fixed at the rate at which they were fixed. What the tenant could give—it was not what he chose to give but what he could afford to give—was the economic value of the land. He could not be asked to give more. If circumstances compelled more to be given to the landlords—and he held they did—then the difference could not come out of the tenant's pocket; and any attempt to make him pay would result in this, that the whole scheme would inevitably break down, and confusion would be worse confounded before ten years were over their heads. It was quite impossible; and, therefore, they had to cast about for what they would do to make up the difference between what the tenant could afford, from the economic standpoint, to pay and what the landlord, with all his difficulties—for some of which, at all events, this House was responsible—could afford to take.

That was not only a suggestive but a satisfactory debate, because it had shown no unreason on the part of the representatives of British constituencies in facing frankly the issue, and, so far as they had spoken, in appreciating it and dealing with it in a kindly spirit. Why should the British taxpayer be called upon to intervene in the matter? That question would be pressed outside if not there. He desired to give three reasons which, in his opinion, made the duty of the British taxpayer perfectly clear. There was an historical obligation resting upon England in this matter. The Irish land system, as it was called, was the English land system. It was planted in Ireland for England's purposes, and the Irish landlords were originally the creation of England. Therefore, looking at that fact—his right hon. and gallant friend was rather proud of the landlords being called the English garrison—he said they were the English garrison for centuries, and by the sheer necessities of the case the House had so legislated during the last twenty-five or thirty years that there was no work for the garrison to do. Their function had gone. The course of legislation had absolutely put them out of court, and there was therefore an historical obligation resting upon this House, in view of that fact, to see that these men, who stood by them in many bitter hours of conflict and of trial, were not unfairly dealt with.

The second point had been dealt with, and therefore he would only speak of it briefly. He was one of those who believed that the report of the Financial Relations Commission substantially stated the truth in the matter of Irish taxation. He did not wish to press it, but if this question were to be entertained this matter must be faced, and any grant given now must necessarily be taken as a partial set-off in that matter. But he thought the third reason was more powerful than the other reasons put together. Talk of hundreds of thousands of pounds. Talk of millions! Why, the peace of Ireland was worth many millions to this country and to the Empire. And when he found the Member for Cork putting his hand to a document which pointed out the unexampled opportunity that there is now of reconciling classes and of securing an agrarian peace in a country that had been torn for centuries with agrarian feud—and standing up and pleading in that House for reconciliation and peace between all classes in Ireland, the peace of Ireland was worth many millions of pounds to this country, and to that House, and to the Empire at large. He did not trouble himself about what was to come after; sufficient for the day was the evil thereof. Some of his hon. friends talked to him about the danger of repudiation. Some of them said the Member for Cork was in a mood for peace to-day but he might be for war to-morrow. All he could say was this—they had got the bedrock of fact to go upon here. This was not a new proposal. Land purchase had been in operation for twenty years, or almost twenty years. Twenty-three millions had been spent upon it; 80,000 men had purchased under it. Let the Chief Secretary himself be his witness. The right hon. Gentleman had no bad debts—the very phrase he used last session.

Let him say to his right hon. and gallant friend the Member for North Armagh he did not accept his brilliant picture of the state of the Irish tenants the whole country over. He had been in the West, and in Donegal and he knew what they were; and the poorest of them, and the most ragged of them, the most destitute and forlorn of them, would make as great exertions to meet their obligations under this Act, if passed, as the richest. People talked about Home Rule coming immediately after that. Very well, let them face the facts, whatever they were; clear this question out of the way; get rid of this trouble that was at the root of every Irish trouble, and the settlement of every other Irish question would be rendered easier and simpler. That was one of the greatest arguments he knew for a complete and final measure. They had other issues in Ireland besides the land awaiting solution, but nothing could be done in that country until this land trouble was got out of the way. He did not know whether the Chief Secretary would listen to any appeal he would make, but he made it in all sincerity, and he made it in the name of tens of thousands of men for whom he had some right to speak in Ulster; he made a most earnest appeal to him that when he introduced his Bill he should take his courage in both hands, that he should manfully grapple with the question, and that he would do his best to carry out the words of the King himself in his speech, "to complete this series of Acts which has wrought such great benefit in Ireland in the past."

*MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said that the House of Commons might not generally recognise it, but he believed that they were on the eve of one of the most momentous changes for Ireland, and for this country, that had ever been indicated by any debate during the twelve years that he had been a Member of the House of Commons. They had been invited by the Chief Secretary, in vague and nebulous language, to lead him kindly on in the Bill he had promised. He would quote to the right hon. Gentleman, "Lead, kindly Light." If ever there was light thrown on an agrarian problem since he had sat in the House of Commons, it had been shed from different quarters by divergent interêsts in the most kindly, tolerant, and conciliatory way. He had only risen because the debate, excellent though it was, had been confined to men of varying shades of politics from Ireland, from Scotland, and from Northumberland. So far, no degenerate Southerner had intervened; but it was only because he believed that the Southerner, in proportion to his wealth, would not hesitate to pay his equitable, proper and just share towards the settlement of a difficult Irish problem, that he stood up as a Southerner and a Londoner, to contribute his share of responsibility to what he hoped would be the solution of a vexed Imperial question. He would ask the House to recognise what had happened in the debate. Twelve speakers had spoken; and they included men who previously were in deadly political conflict, which had made debates in the House alternately exciting and depressing.

To-day conciliation had succeeded conflict, calmness had succeeded passion, and with it he hoped peace had come for Ireland and the removal forever from the floor of the Imperial Parliament of an issue which he would always have made a domestic one. He believed that this debate inaugurated a most momentous change for the benefit of Ireland. It was an agrarian experiment of great magnitude, the lines of which did not, perhaps, conform entirely with the ideals held in Radical circles, but he thought they ought to make mutual concessions in a case of this kind and abandon the strict political principle, if the result of so doing would be to terminate the terrible quarrel which for seven centuries had divided England and Ireland, and which had distracted their counsels to such an extent that it had become a discredit and a reproach. He supported with all his heart the kindly, forcible, and practical view taken by the right hon. Member for Berwick that afternoon. The views expressed by him and the right hon. Member for Montrose and the hon. and learned Member for Haddingtonshire contained a means by which a compromise could be arrived at; by which the tenant would get relief—and the landlord get no more than he was entitled to—Ireland would get rest from the trouble in which she had been so long involved, and the British taxpayer would see near his own door that happiness, peace and prosperity to secure which we had wasted hundreds of millions in the Transvaal, when, in the case of Ireland, a very few millions would have sufficed to have brought relief. If that credit was advanced for some years State control must follow. If money was advanced to the tenant for the improvement of his position by the State it was only right that State control should follow.

We had sent money to Indian famines and other cases of distress. We had been helping lame dogs over the stile in every part of the globe. It was now Ireland's turn, and if the State advanced the money to the tenants the State should see and the tenants should agree that the repayment should come with even greater punctuality than rent was paid to a private landlord. In the event of a tenant not being able either to continue his purchase or to pay his rent, or to properly cultivate, then the State should have a right of preemption, and if necessary resumption. If the State was good enough to lend its credit to help a man in difficulties the man helped would never object to that reasonable control and those reasonable safeguards which the State had a right to expect and receive in return for collective help. In this particular he hoped the Irish Members were prepared to conform to sound Radical views on the land question. If they did not they would have to do something else and make great sacrifices, and the Radical land reformers might have to make equally great concessions. He had recently visited Ireland, and he frankly stated that he did not, and could not, share the optimistic views of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh. He went there with his own views upon the land question which the preventable poverty and misery of the people in some particular regions absolutely dissipated. He saw a practically derelict country ; he saw too frequently illness, drink, degradation, absence of proper food and proper clothes, the ascendency of certain interests which ought never to prevail in a nation which had its own land and was economically free from those encumbrances and embarrassments which were continually met among the Irish peasants and Irish farmers, and he came home convinced that if there was a duty on the part of the British Member of Parliament, that this primary duty rested upon him, to the extent that he should put aside all preconceived notions of political economy and expense, in order to save Ireland from this derelict condition before it was too late. He was not so sure that even now this Land Bill, hopeful though it might be with all the happy promise of relief which he trusted it would bring to Ireland's social, political and moral requirements, was not being introduced fifty or sixty years too late, when reparation was impossible. He had never seen a nation whose people's life was so hard, whose people were so virtuous under such adverse conditions, so moral under such degrading conditions, hoping against hope that the British Parliament would come to their relief.

He appealed to the House to regard this question entirely on its merits and to do what had to be done as generously as possible, and not in any narrow and niggardly spirit. If the economic and social condition of the Irish people could be brought home to those British members and British taxpayers who had not seen Ireland as he had seen it, he was convinced that they would subordinate any views they had and accept the responsibility of settling the Irish question in this, the only if not the best way it could be settled. Even if the Land Bill were passed it would be possible in a few generations for either the Gomheen man or the Jew to become in the process of years possessed of large tracts of Ireland, and be worse landlords than those which at present existed. Such a possibility would have to be prevented by adequate safeguards in the interests of the State as a whole. The question before the House that night was, how seven centuries of strife and bitterness between two peoples could be terminated, and the man who wished to live his life and earn his living in Ireland, in his own home, from his labour get that adequate return he ought to get for living that life which every honest man desired to live. The projected Bill promised to solve this problem, and he appealed to the Chief Secretary for Ireland not be influenced or intimidated by criticisms in that House, but to realise that it was one of the traditions of a responsible Conservative Government—and they had now the opportunity — that they should settle the land question, and they must do so on broad, generous and big lines. If they did not take that view their Bill would be a miserable failure, and upon the Government would rest the terrible responsibility of consigning four millions of people to conditions which they had endured too long, to a condition of degradation, over-taxation, and misrule to which they never ought to have been subjected, and which by the passing of a good Land Bill there was hope for a change and the possibility of that peace, happiness and prosperity to Ireland which all desired to see.

*MR. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour) said that many references had been made to the opportunity presented to the Chief Secretary by the present condition of affairs in Ireland, but no one could deny that that opportunity had been immensely improved by the debate to which the House had listened. From no quarter of the House had a single discouraging word proceeded, by which fact the right hon. Gentleman should be encouraged to face the question in a broad and statesmanlike manner. The whole importance of the report depended on the grant to be made by the Treasury; everything else might be left on one side. All that had been done would be rendered absolutely useless unless there was forthcoming that financial assistance which would induce the landlords to sell and enable the tenants to buy. The task the conference had to face was that of devising some scheme which would substitute inducement for compulsion, and enable a voluntary and amicable settlement to be arrived at between the two parties. The price offered by the tenants was the highest possible, and would only be given to secure a final settlement, but it fell short of the amount required to induce the landlord to part with his interest in the land. Dual ownership had been condemned, and it would have been unreasonable and absurd to ask the landlords' representatives to agree to sell their land without assuring them the income they were at present receiving from it. The financial assistance the right hon. Gentleman was asked to provide was, therefore, neither more nor less than the necessary inducement to the landlord to sell. The figure given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose was considerably higher than anything entertained in the conference, so there could be no doubt that, if that figure were accepted by the Government, it would give complete satisfaction to those who signed the report and to the landlord party in Ireland. He hoped the Chief Secretary had not allowed himself to be influenced by certain criticisms which had been made. Those criticisms, so far as they were directed against the financial portion of the scheme, were based, not on the reluctance of the Irish people to tax themselves, but entirely on the belief that the Government would not give the necessary financial assistance. That difficulty had been removed by the debate on the present Amendment, as it had been made perfectly clear, he thought, that if the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues made up their minds to submit a scheme such as was foreshadowed by the Land Conference, the House of Commons would not only consider that scheme sympathetically, but give it its support.

On the Government was thrown the responsibility of settling this purely Irish question. The Irish people had no power to tax themselves, or to settle the question in their own country, and if the House of Commons did not ratify a bargain struck between the two contending parties and agreed to by all classes it would be in the position of defeating the Irish people in the effort to make peace among themselves. The tenants' offer had been screwed up to the highest possible figure, but they were prepared to stand by the agreement. They were not forgetful of the fact that in working out the details there would be much difficulty and trouble, but they were not going to judge the right hon. Gentleman by those details. The one thing to which they would look would be the financial proposals of the Government. From his knowledge of the feeling in Ireland he had no hesitation in saying that if they had the power to tax themselves and deal with this question in their own country they would readily do so. Would the Government, under such circumstances, by refusing the necessary assistance, stand in the way of a settlement, which would undoubtedly bring to Ireland new hope, and inevitably lead to the happiness and prosperity of the country? Landlord and tenant would, under such a settlement, mix together, and the industrial development of Ireland would receive an immense impetus. The Government had a great opportunity of ensuring peace between different classes, of securing a happier condition of the country, and enabling a greater attention to be paid to its industrial development; the price they were asked to pay was a very small one, and one which the debate had shown the House of Commons was prepared to pay.

*MR. SHARPE (Kensington, N.) said that as a Metropolitan Member and a warm supporter of the government, he rejoiced at the universal satisfaction which had been expressed at the near prospect of settling this great Irish land question on a reasonable and just basis. It was also a source of great satisfaction that the question was to be settled not by a local assembly but by the Imperial Parliament. He felt that this result would be achieved when they found men of all parties supporting warmly and cordially the proposals of the recent Land Conference. They did not know the facts nor the circumstances connected with the measure which his right hon. friend was bringing forward, but he felt quite sure that the English public and the English taxpayer would be inclined to deal generously with a country to which they were bound by so many ties and by sympathy. This was not a matter for niggardliness, or cheeseparing, or jealousy. The hon. Member for Battersea had spoken of this as being a step in an agrarian direction, but he wished the House of Commons to lay down the great rule that they should be just and fear not. They should do what was right to Ireland in the present circumstances, and leave the future to take care of itself. He felt no apprehension with regard to the taxpayers, for he believed they would be willing to make a liberal grant to save the Irish gentry from extinction, and so settle this matter on a true, proper, and equitable basis. If that could be done what did it matter that a a large amount of money by way of free grant would be required to purchase such a magnificent result ? That was the spirit in which they should approach the question, and he hoped that all sections would stand by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, if he saw his way to bring forward in a large and liberal spirit the reform which had been supported from all sides of the House.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.) said he wanted to say a word upon this question. The right hon. and gallant Member for Armagh had indicated that there was some little difference of opinion between him and his fellow-countrymen who sat on the Nationalist Benches as to the condition of the Irish tenant. He wished to put it to the House that it ought to be part of a statesmanlike policy in the coming Land Bill to place the poor people in the West of Ireland in such a position that John Bull might there have a solvent and prosperous people to deal with. He wished to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to give a generous consideration to the congested districts in his Bill, and not a niggardly one.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I hope the House will now permit me to withdraw my Amendment, for I feel that the object I had in view has been served.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

THE EXCLUSION OF CANADIAN CATTLE.

MR. PRICE (Norfolk, E.) said he begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name on the Paper. He would not bring forward the usual excuses that they were living under another Parliament and under another Government, and another President of the Board of Agriculture, because the real reason why he thought that this Act should be repealed wholly or in part was because he believed it was a most unjust Act to several portions of the community. He believed the Act had worked badly, and, as far as it was experimental in its character, it had failed. He felt that the time had arrived, after a six years' trial, when the House might be asked to pronounce that this Act, which excluded foreign cattle, and more particularly Canadian cattle, had been a failure from every point of view. The present President of the Board of Agriculture, as far as he knew, did not favour this view, in fact he had expressed opinions on several occasions in a diametrically opposite sense. Circumstances had come to his knowledge which led him to hope that the right hon. Gentleman might now be prepared to adopt a different position. In his own district there was a gentleman who had taken the field as a candidate, and, according to his own account, had triumphantly passed an examination at the head centre of the Conservative Party, that although he was found to be a completely sound supporter of the Government, at the head centre of his own Party, when he came down to his constituency he pronounced himself strongly against this Bill; and so he could only conclude that the gentleman referred to had received assurances that the Act to which he objected was not going to continue on the Statute-book with the connivance of the Conservative Government. He was afraid that the gentleman in question had not had a conversation with the President of the Board of Agriculture.

MR. HANBURY: Hear, hear!

MR. PRICE said he assumed from that interruption that the right hon. Gentleman's opinions had not changed, and therefore he should ask the House to let him take them very briefly through the history of the Act. Up to 1892 Canadian store and other foreign cattle to some extent were imported into this country. It was, however, with the Canadian store cattle that he meant to deal. Canadian store cattle were imported in very large quantities for some years, and very extensively in Norfolk, the eastern counties, and in the East of Scotland. There were large districts in England where the principal agricultural interest was that of fattening cattle, and the Canadian cattle were the very best store cattle they could have. There never was a greater blow inflicted on his district than when they were deprived of this very best raw material by this Act. At that time there was an Act on the Statute-book which permitted the Board of Agriculture to exclude these cattle from any country where there was any disease. In 1892 there was a case of suspected disease among cattle, and next year there were one or two more. They were cases of suspicion only. He had never denied that the officials of the Board of Agriculture were justified in treating a case of suspicion of pleuro-pneumonia as if they were cases of conviction, and he never objected to them preventing such cattle from landing on our shores. None of those who opposed this Act had ever taken an opposite view to this.

During the years 1893, 1894, and 1895 Canadian store cattle were still excluded, because the cases he had mentioned were still under suspicion. He thought it was only fair to say that Canada ought to be found guiltless of having any cattle disease, for the Canadians never admitted the fact and they challenged the Government to prove it. What was more, the facts had turned out to be in favour of Canada. It was quite true that there were officials at the Board of Agriculture whose ability could not be impugned for a moment, but no one knew better than he did that it was easy to make a wrong diagnosis. He thought it was impossible to imagine such a state of things as had been alleged either arising or existing in Canada with regard to pleuro-pneumonia. The officials of the Board of Agriculture might frankly say that, in point of fact, they did not now think there was disease in Canada. But whether they did so or not, the fact was that there had been no pleuro-pneumonia in Canada of any kind.

In 1896 the then President of the Board of Agriculture brought in a Bill, which became an Act they were now seeking to have in part repealed. That Act had been defended on several grounds. The President of the Board of Agriculture stated then that he believed there was disease in Canada, and that we were only protected by Order in Council and not by Act of Parliament. That being so, he said there was always a dangerous agitation going on for the admission of those cattle, and that this at some future time might be allowed to take place. This was commented on as being a reflection on those who would succeed him in office, but this the right hon. Gentleman repudiated altogether. The right hon. Gentleman stated that it might not always be possible, in view of an agitation taking place, to keep the ports closed against cases of suspicion. He also said he considered that only a small number of people existed in the districts which were interested in imported store cattle, whereas a very much larger number existed in the breeding districts of England where the people wished to have restrictions imposed upon the importation. The right hon. Gentleman at that time gave statistics which were probably from the 4th of June Return. That, however, would give a very wrong impression regarding the average number of cattle in the districts. If the census were taken at another period of the year they would arrive at a very different proportion. The late President of the Board of Agriculture in his speech on that occasion made a number of prophecies which had not been justified by events. Those who opposed the Bill expressed great fear that there would be a scarcity of store cattle in the feeding districts, that the price would rise very considerably, and that the feeding enterprise, hitherto prosperous, would be seriously injured through those engaged in the trade not being able to obtain store cattle. The right hon. Gentleman stated with all the strength of his official position he had reason to believe that while the Bill would give breeders security against disease, it would provide a supply of stores which would meet the demands. Of course one of their arguments was, that if, as the right hon. Gentleman supposed, the Act would give a stimulus to breeding and induce breeders to breed more cattle, it would only be because by getting higher prices they would be able to make more profit. Though it was unfortunately the fact that ever since that time the price had been materially higher, he did not think any one could say there would be a profit in feeding stores for the market. The increase in the supply of stores from the midland districts, and even from Ireland, had not been at all marked, if there had been any at all.

The right hon. Gentleman had kindly supplied him with statistics showing that at the present moment there was a larger number of cattle in this country than in 1896. He found that in 1896 there were 10,753,000, and now there were 200,000 more. That was not a very large increase for six years. In fact, it was only about double the increase for one year previous to the passage of the Act. He could not help saying that the forecast of the late President of the Board of Agriculture had been utterly falsified by events. The hon. Member asked the House to look at the case from the Canadian point of view. He understood from speeches delivered by the right hon. Gentleman that he was of opinion that the Canadian case was not so strong as it had been. He held that the Canadian case was even stronger now than formerly, because there was not now any suspicion of disease. He did not know whether the feeling was so strong as it was before, but he hoped it was not, for in 1896 the Canadians were almost mad against the restrictions which were imposed. He hoped they had not been in that state of *quasi* insanity ever since. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman read the literature on this subject. Some of it was so uncomplimentary to him that he would not read it in this House, not because it was unparliamentary, but because of the strength of the language in which the right hon. Gentleman's actions were criticised. He had seen the report of a meeting at which one of the speakers, a gentleman largely interested in the cattle trade as an exporter, expressed the view that the fear of pleuro-pneumonia was not what animated the British Parliament in passing the law, but rather a desire to give protection to our own breeders and feeders in the markets of this country. This showed that the feeling in Canada on the subject was still strong. He doubted whether the right hon. Gentleman was correct in stating that Canada was doing a good business in cattle. Some districts were suitable for feeding and others for breeding purposes. The feeding districts were, no doubt, very well employed at present. They were feeding beasts and sending them over here as fat cattle. The breeding districts of Canada were not so well employed as before. From the districts not suitable for feeding the Canadians had been in recent years sending large quantities of store cattle over the frontier into America, paying a duty of 27 per cent. These cattle could be introduced free into this country, and they were just the raw material we wanted to turn into meat for the people of England. He understood that the bulk of the Scotch beef came to the London market. What was the position in English districts which went in for the feeding of cattle? Their position was, he thought, as bad as they had foretold it would be when these restrictions were imposed. People thought he was exaggerating when he said it would cause ruin in some cases. Throughout the eastern counties, where feeding was the industry, the process of ruin was going on. He wrote to some friends and asked them their view of the situation.

A correspondent, writing on behalf of the Secretary of the Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture, said—

> "I can honestly say that the price of store stock is so high that it is impossible for us to see any return upon our outlay. Thus, if we are to buy at six and a half as stores, how is it possible for us to sell at six and a half when fat?

This is the exact position we are in, and one that I see no way out of, as the breeding of stock in this country has declined, and is declining year by year, and my opinion is that we cannot compete with any chance of success so long as this one-sided protection is continued."

He did not know really whether his informant was right or wrong in saying that the breeding of stock was actually diminishing in this country, but if it was not diminishing it was very nearly at a standstill, while the quality of the stock bred had not improved as the late President of the Board of Agriculture said he hoped it would. In point of fact, in the early part of the year the class of stores which came over from Ireland was very good, but later in the season they became worse and worse in quality, and short in number. Feeders had to buy lean, hungry beasts, which, instead of putting on flesh after eating up the feeders' food stuffs, weighed no more at the end of a week than before. They were of that class of desperate beasts which broke the farmer's heart. Feeders sighed and sighed in vain for Canadian stores, which were always healthy, took readily to their food, and soon grew fat. The best market they had for stores had apparently been closed against them beyond recall, and he supposed that the moans of the feeders would not appeal to the right hon. the President of the Board of Agriculture to prevent the dying out of a profitable industry, which had produced in the past not only "the roast beef of old England," but the roast beef of old England of the very best. He begged to move the Amendment standing in his name, and he trusted that it would meet with sufficient support to carry it if the right hon. Gentleman did not see his way to give a favourable answer.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said he was glad to have the opportunity of seconding the Amendment. He had never made this a Party question, because he had attacked Ministers of both Parties on the subject. His own constituents were concerned in the question, but it was one which affected the whole interests and prosperity of the agriculture of Scotland. He was sorry that the hon. Member for Islington was unable to be present to second the Amendment, because from his position as President of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, and as the representative of a large City constituency, he would have been able to give reasons for the faith that was in him. This was not solely a farmers' question, but one deeply affecting the supply of cheap and wholesome food for the people. Nobody could tell him that animals brought over sea, after a long voyage, and slaughtered at the port of debarkation, could yield good and wholesome food. Those animals should be put on to the beautiful plains of Forfarshire and Aberdeenshire, where they could be fed up by skilful farmers before finding their way to the mouths and stomachs of the consumers.

Since the great meeting of farmers and representative of the large towns in the country had been held in Westminster, his hon. friend had gone to Canada and there ascertained for himself the fact that not only was there now no pleuro-pneumonia in that country, but that it had never existed there, and that their cattle had been unjustly shut out from the markets of Great Britain. Two years ago the hon. Member for Kincardineshire and he had got up a conference in Aberdeen on the subject. It was not a hole-and-corner meeting, but open to all, and was attended by a large number of representative farmers. If this had been a question between the feeding and the breeding industries, that would have been brought out at the meeting, but only one dissentient voice had been raised against the proposal to freely admit into this country Canadian store cattle, and that had been speedily drowned. One of the greatest shorthorn breeders in the world had expressed the opinion that the exclusion of Canadian store cattle from this country was injurious to the best interests of agriculture. He had been glad to hear from his hon. friend that some doubt had been expressed as to the continuance of stiff-backedness on the part of the Minister for Agriculture in regard to this matter, but that the right hon. Gentleman could not do anything without legislation, and that he could not induce his colleagues to give him time to pass a Bill. He had prepared a Bill on the subject and would be glad to hand it over to the right hon. Gentleman, who could pilot it through all the quicksands and rocks which a private Bill had to encounter in this House. The cattle feeders of Aberdeenshire and Kincardineshire, who were the most successful in Scotland, and naturally in the world, felt deeply the taxation of the raw material which was necessary to carry on their industry, and that they were compelled to see the money which formerly flowed into their pockets transferred to the pockets of the Canadian feeders. His hon. friend had described the animals which came over from Ireland as lean and hungry beasts, although they had improved a little of late. Whether that was due to the longing for "home, sweet home," which was predominant in the Celtic breast of every man and beast from Ireland, he did not know; but the fact remained that the Irish store cattle did not take kindly to their new surroundings, and did not feed up so quickly as the Canadian stores, which eventually yielded a profit to the feeders of from £2 to £5 per head. One of the reasons for the exclusion of Canadian stores from this country was the risk that they would introduce here cattle disease. If he were assured of that he never would be in favour of their introduction. The talk about Canadian disease was now a bogey. He did not believe it existed. While speaking, in all respect, of the scientific advisers of the Board of Agriculture, he thought the balance of opinion was against them. They had heard that the representative of Canada scornfully repudiated the accusation. Would not the Canadian people be the first to stamp out disease in their own interests if it existed? In these days of an enterprising press if disease existed in Canada they could not prevent the news being wafted over to England. Another point was that the frontier of the United States has been free from disease for at least six months; and he understood that the frontier arrangements for the purpose of preventing disease being imported were now amply sufficient. He hoped, therefore, the President of the Board of Agriculture would give a sympathetic reply. He was glad his hon. friend had brought forward his motion in such an excellent speech, and he would gladly second it.

Amendment proposed:—

"At the end of the Question to add the words, 'And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the absence of cattle disease in the Dominion of Canada and the requirements of cattle feeders in this country justify the repeal of the law which excludes Canadian store cattle from our markets.'"—(*Mr. Price.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

*MR. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock) said that as a feeder of cattle, and not a breeder, he intended to vote against the Amendment, because although the restrictions had caused some inconvenience, the protection of cattle from disease consequent upon those restrictions in his judgment far more than compensated for any inconvenience they had caused, and they were deeply indebted to the Government for the precaution they had taken to protect their herds. He remembered quite well in years gone by when their herds were devastated through foreign disease, to-day they were practically free from any such scourge, and he attributed it in no small degree to the precautions which had been taken by the Government with reference to the importation of foreign cattle. Of course he was ready to admit, as a somewhat large grazier, that in recent years the industry had not been so profitable as formerly, but that was a difficulty that would right itself, and if it was found that cattle rearing was more profitable than cattle feeding, cattle rearing would increase and feeding would decrease. A discontinuance of the precautions would lead to a periodical influx of cattle disease that would injure not only agriculturists but the whole country. The hon. Member for East Norfolk had hinted that this was Protection. It was. It was the protection of their native cattle from disease imported from abroad. That was the kind of protection of which he was an enthusiastic supporter. Even if there were no restrictions they would not get the same number of store cattle from Canada to-day as formerly. The low price and the increased production of corn in that country compelled farmers to use their own store cattle to consume the corn; but any advantage that would be gained by the removal of the restrictions would be overbalanced by the dangers which would be incurred. Consequently, he should vote against the Amendment.

*MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said he hoped the House would not be led away by his hon. friends the Member for East Norfolk and the Member for West Aberdeenshire in regard to this matter. No one could put the case of the large grazier and the large landowner stronger than they did; but he desired to put the point of view of the general good of the population. His hon. friend the Member for Kincardineshire at the Conference had said that the question was a working man's question; and there he most cordially agreed with him. The working man was entitled to be considered equally with the large graziers of Aberdeenshire and Norfolk. His hon. friend the Member for East Norfolk represented that the number of cattle in this country was declining. The latest statistics, however, showed that cattle had increased during the last sixteen or seventeen years from 10,000,000 to nearly 11,500,000, which was a very satisfactory state of things. Speaking as a man who had a practical knowledge of farming, and had to make his living by farming, he cordially endorsed all that had been said by the hon. Member for the Tavistock Division with reference to this question. It was not a case of Protection *versus* Free Trade in the ordinary sense of the words. Many hon. Members were old enough to remember the terrible havoc wrought in Scotland thirty-five or forty years ago by rinderpest, which ruined farmer after farmer as well as the agricultural community in many places. Why, therefore, should they run the great and serious risk they would run if they swept away those restrictions. His hon. friend the Member for East Norfolk gave away his whole case in one sentence. He said the frontier was always open. That was just the difficulty. It was not a question of Canadian cattle; it was a question of cattle from the Gulf of Mexico right up to the Canadian frontier. It was impossible to devise any scheme by which cattle could be prevented from getting into Canada from the United States. He had seen a great deal of that part of the country. Huge herds of cattle were driven north by a small army of men, and the entire population of Canada could not stop them from entering that country. It was said that the United States was free from disease six months ago. Was that any reason why the United States should be regarded as free from disease now, or in a few days or weeks hence? Where there were large herds of cattle, as in the United States, it was impossible to say whether there was disease or not. Irish cattle were infinitely better than Canadian cattle, just as Irish horses were the best in the world, because they got careful individual attention. When animals ran wild in large herds, they had all the characteristics of wild beasts; whereas, in Ireland the cattle were carefully tended, and even small farmers in that country treated their stock with more care and attention than farmers in either England or Scotland. If the constituents of his hon. friends paid more attention to cattle tending, they would be doing more good than by agitating for the removal of the restrictions. There was one matter in which much might be done to increase the food supply of the country, and that was by preventing the destruction of immature calves for food. That would increase the number of cattle in the country by thousands. The murder — that was the only word for it—that went on was perfectly sinful. How could such food make up for the roast beef of Old England? That was a great national question. No one appreciated anything colonial more than he did, being a Colonial himself; but the case had not been put——

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

THE EXCLUSION OF CANADIAN CATTLE.

Order read, for resuming adjourned Debate on Amendment [25th February] to Main Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to

Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Which Amendment was:—

"At the end of the Question to add the words, 'And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the absence of cattle disease in the Dominion of Canada and the requirements of cattle feeders in this country justify the repeal of the law which excludes Canadian store cattle from our markets.'"—(*Mr. Price.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

*MR. CATHCART WASON, continuing his speech, said the hon. Member for Aberdeenshire had put the case very forcibly when he had stated that the money was not to go into the pockets of the landlords and graziers of this country, but into the pockets of the Canadian farmers. That was precisely where the money ought to go. He had also described to the House why it was that these wild cattle, all bone and muscle, running in vast herds in Canada, should recuperate on the vast fertile fields of Aberdeenshire rather than be slaughtered, where he submitted they ought to be slaughtered, in their own country, and be sent over here in the chilled or frozen condition, the best possible food for the people. Speaking as a practical agriculturist, he thought the practice of bringing wild cattle of this sort over to this country for store purposes was a great evil. No one knew how they were bred or reared. They brought them over here and put them on the rich fertile pastures of Aberdeenshire, which, in his opinion, could be devoted to the much better purpose of raising strong men and women than foreign cattle, with all the risks of importing disease into this country. He was not now concerned for the farmers, but speaking to the utmost of his ability on behalf of the small occupiers. If they had small occupiers they would look after their two or three store cattle and tend them properly, and nothing needed greater care and attention than cattle. The best horses that came to England were the Irish, which were carefully bred, tended, and reared by small occupiers, and the worst were the brumbies or wild horses of Australia which roamed in vast herds and never saw the face of man. The case was precisely the same with regard to those Canadian store cattle. Mr. Colman, whose name had been quoted in the debate, had said that Canada was ready and willing to send over any number of cattle that might be required for our markets. That was a very heavy order, and let them see exactly what was needed; there were very few more cattle in Canada than there were in Ireland. This was not a question of the 4,000,000 or 5,000,000 of cattle in Canada; it was a question of the 50,000,000 in America and Mexico. Both the mover and seconder of this Amendment had been misled in this matter, and had not looked at it from a practical point of view. They had been misled by the gentlemen who owned ships and who had interests in the great cattle trusts of America. It was a question of the interest of the peasant proprietors in Ireland, and the crofters and small farmers in Scotland, as against that of the graziers and great landowners. He knew with the great bulk of his constituency the feeling was very strong that a man was not given land to do as he liked with, and that if ever the land got back to the people the immense tracts of deer forests which now existed would be able to breed and rear thousands of cattle. Although a farmer himself, he never argued this question from a local standpoint, but simply and solely from the point of view of the national good and general welfare of the community.

It had been said by some in favour of this Motion that if they could get the consumers on their side everything would be settled. He was in favour of the cheapest food for the people, and he would not speak or vote for anything that would raise the price of food and compel the people to go hungry, but there had not been a scintilla of evidence or proof that if the unrestricted importation of Canadian cattle were allowed the food of the people of this country would be any cheaper. It was infinitely better that the Canadian farmer should slaughter his cattle in Canada and send the meat over here in a chilled or frozen state. This question was not a question of the food supply of the people, it was far cheaper to bring over fat stock than store stock, and there was no necessity to bring over these wild steers to benefit the grazier in the North or in Norfolk. As a practical farmer and agriculturist, his opinion was that it would be infinitely better that these vast fertile tracts now occupied by large grazing farmers should be thrown open to small occupiers. This state of things arose from the position taken up years ago when the landlords pulled down the small farms and threw them into large ones, and the result was that these graziers, not being able to obtain labour, now wanted cheaper cattle. There was no question of Protection as against Free Trade. The country was entitled to Protection for its cattle so long as it did not interfere with the food supply of the people. For all these reasons he urged the House by an overwhelming majority to reject the proposal now before them.

MR. LLEWELLYN (Somersetshire, N.), speaking on behalf of the dairy farmers of this country, said he did not suppose that many members of the House recollected the state of affairs, in the West of England particularly, some years ago, when the country was suffering under the terrible scourge of the foot-and-mouth disease. Many people were apt to say, looking at the number of cattle that died, that the dearth of cattle did not show any great increase at that time, but those who had dairies and had to go through that terrible time would tell a very different tale. We had seen in one village the milk of fifty cows thrown away day and night, and no one desired that there should be any possibility of a recurrence of such a thing as that. As for Canadian stock, if they could be obtained at a price in England, the people were right to get them, but he could tell hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House that they could get as good, and better, store stock to put in their yards from Ireland. The most important food for young children was new, pure milk, and everybody knew how quickly milk became contaminated, and if they had a recurrence of this terrible scourge they would no longer have pure milk. On those grounds, on behalf of the dairy farmers of the West of England, he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman the Minister of Agriculture, to be perfectly firm and to maintain this country in the position in which it now was with regard to this matter.

*MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross) regretted that on the first occasion that he should address the House this session, he should find himself in conflict with the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland, but this was a proposition which he most heartily welcomed. Of course no one desired to have any risk of disease being imported by animals into this country, but the Amendment had shown conclusively that there was not now, and had not been for a number of years past any disease in Canada. No one in this debate had alluded to the speech made by Mr. Fisher, the Canadian Minister of Agriculture, at Montreal on the fifth of this month. That gentleman had been able to prove conclusively that neither now nor for many years past had there been the slightest chance of disease being imported by Canadian cattle, and he had further said with regard to Great Britain that if she were shutting her doors against Canadian cattle it must be for some other reason, and that he would be glad if anything further could be done to remove the embargo. At the Conference last year a very important speech was made by the official inspector of meat in the Glasgow market. That gentleman said he had examined the different slaughter-houses in the city of Glasgow, and had also gone to the port where Canadian cattle were slaughtered, and he had stated that, so far as the test of the lungs and whatever tests there might be were concerned, he found the Canadian cattle were healthier than the cattle slaughtered at home. This was not a question entirely for the farmers. In the place where he lived everyone was in favour of this restriction being removed. In Orkney and Shetland the farmers to a man wished this restriction to be retained, because they got higher prices for their stock. He hoped, therefore, they would get some recognition from the Minister of Agriculture. It had been said that it was not a question of Canadian cattle alone, but that over the frontiers of Canada would come cattle from The Argentine, Mexico and the United States of America. The Canadian Government were willing to give a guarantee that all cattle should be sent over free from disease, and, of course, if the Irish cattle were better than the Canadian, it would not hurt Ireland, because she would always make a higher price. This was a matter of wide interest to the consumers of this country, and he hoped his hon. friends would go to a division, and so prove that there was no reason why Canadian cattle should not be admitted free from this restriction as they had been in the past.

*MR. GARDNER (Berkshire, Wokingham) expressed the opinion that very good reason should be given for any tampering with this restriction. The only reason given, so far as he could gather at present, was that it would benefit a few large graziers in Scotland and East Anglia. If that were compared with the great interests involved in this question it would be seen that it was in ridiculous disproportion to them. The mover of the Amendment had declared that the present condition of affairs was unjust to these people; that the restriction worked badly, and that the experiment had failed. The last few years had shown how free we were from cattle disease, and if this law had produced no other effect than that, it could not be said to have failed. If the consumers suffered, their voices would be heard loudly enough, and the consumers' voices had not been heard. Whatever cattle Canada had to part with would come into this country, alive or dead; and the consumer would get his food just as well as if these cattle went to the grazier. Scotch graziers were said to have complained, but, judging from the first-class Highland stock which came down from the North, the Scotch grazier could not be so hard up for stock, otherwise he would have kept those sent down. East Anglia could get good stores from Ireland, and it would be the greatest mistake, for the sake of 50,000 head of Canadian store stock, to run the risk of importing disease into this country. People had short memories in this matter, and talked lightly of removing the restriction on the importation of cattle. Did hon. Members remember thirty or forty years ago, when these diseases were rife, and whole herds were attacked and were apparently without protection? He remembered the passing of these Acts, when all sorts of allegations were made that it was for the protection of the British farmer, and that the consumer would suffer. Nothing of the kind had happened; the consumer had not suffered; and the great cattle producing industry had enjoyed a freedom from disease in cattle which was invaluable to it. The light talk in this matter came mainly from feeders of cattle only, and he could easily understand that those thus interested might be rash enough to run some risk of importing disease, if they could obtain cheaper stores. But he knew, on the other hand, what injury and ruin disease could bring to breeders not only of cattle but all kinds of stock, and protection to them was of the first importance.

Any relaxation of this Act would take away that confidence that breeders and rearers have to carry as much stock as possible on the land in their occupation. It had been argued that Canadian stores should be admitted. He took it that the Act applied to all countries alike, and that all foreign and Colonial cattle were prevented from coming here to be distributed hither and thither at the will of importers. If they allowed the thin end of the wedge to be driven in here, it might very easily be driven further. So long as the restriction applied to all countries alike no country had any particular grievance. However careful or desirous of stamping out disease the Canadians might be, it was not impossible that disease might come into their country without their knowledge. He felt confident that in the President of the Board of Agriculture they had a good friend, and it was hardly necessary to ask the right hon. Gentleman to stand firm against this Amendment, and to set his face strongly against any proposal that would open our ports to the importation of live cattle, other than for slaughter at place of landing, owing to the great danger to the health of the flocks and herds of this kingdom.

*MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.) said he should offer the Amendment his most strenuous opposition. He did not understand the argument of his hon. friend above the Gangway, who had spoken of the importation of cattle. So far as his colleagues and himself were concerned, they did not object to the importation of fat cattle, no matter from what quarter they came, so long as this meant cheapening the food of the masses. He thought the hon. Member had lost sight of the fact that this Amendment was confined to the importation of store cattle, which was another matter altogether. He opposed this Amendment for various reasons. In the first place, he opposed it because his constituents were opposed to it; and in the second place, because every representative body in his county, from the County Council down to the Board of Guardians, was opposed to it. Finally, he opposed it because his constituents were not large farmers, but, on the contrary, they were small farmers; in fact, many of them, owing to the extreme smallness of their holdings, could not be called farmers at all. The small farmers of the West of Ireland were acknowledged to be the best breeders of store cattle in these three Kingdoms, and this fact would be admitted by any agricultural expert in England who was in the habit of visiting the fairs in the West of Ireland. He had had a conversation with an Englishman who was a very large buyer in Ireland, and he had told him that the bringing in of store cattle from Canada would prove to be a ruinous business for the people at large. Whoever heard of a fat beast coming from Canada? The people of England who were experts would readily admit that the importation of store cattle from Canada would be an evil. Now, when a measure was about to be introduced which it was sincerely to be hoped would abolish dual ownership in Ireland, it was hardly an opportune time for embarking in legislation which meant ruin to the small farmers of that country. Therefore, he hoped that the President of the Board of Agriculture would not accept this Amendment. He thoroughly agreed with the hon. Member opposite who had alluded to the dangers to creameries by the importation of store cattle. It would be nothing short of a calamity to accept this Amendment, which he hoped would be rejected.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said that he took an active interest in opposing the Act of 1896, and therefore he should like to say a few words. The Amendment of his hon. friend called for the repeal of the law which excluded Canadian store cattle from the English markets. The Act of 1896 repealed in a single section a particular section of the Act of 1894, which contained certain provisions for the slaughter of foreign cattle at the ports. The Act of 1896 was resisted with the entire force of the Liberal Opposition. That Act repealed a section of the Act of 1894, thereby taking away from that House and from the Government the power of exercising an administrative discretion as to the importation of cattle. But surely they could trust the discretion of the President of the Board of Agriculture in such a matter. Could there never be any foreign cattle fit to be imported into this country? Supposing the right hon. Gentleman was satisfied that there was no such danger, could they not trust him and his staff to make up their minds without the assent of the House of Lords?

They passed the Act of 1894 on the general ground that a restriction on the importation of cattle was necessarily a matter for administrative discretion which should be settled by the Government of the day on their sole responsibility to this House, without the assent or interference of the House of Lords. He stood by the opinion which he expressed before, and he hoped that all those hon. Members who opposed the Act on a previous occasion would repeat their vote to-night in favour of this Amendment. On the general question of policy there was no doubt a considerable difference of opinion in different parts of the country, and they had heard those opinions expressed in the course of this debate. In the East of Scotland he understood that the opinion was unanimous against the restriction referred to by his hon. friend but personally he rather represented the consumer upon this question and not the agriculturists. He was certain that it was the opinion of the consumers of all the great cities that these restrictions should be removed. On the grounds that it was in the interest of the consumer he should support this Amendment.

MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire) said the hon. Gentleman opposite, the Member for Berks, had made some interesting observations, in which he said that he did not believe that the price of the food of the people had been affected by these restrictions. But was it not a fact that in most parts of the country the price of store cattle had increased? If that be so, was it not natural by the law of economics, that the price of the fatted article had also been increased? If this had not been the case only one person could be affected, and that was the unfortunate farmer, who had to bear the burden. The hon. Gentleman opposite asked the President of the Board of Agriculture not to remove these restrictions, on the ground that it was important that children and invalids should have pure milk. But was it due to the foot-and-mouth disease that these restrictions were imposed? He was under the impression that it was due to a case of pleuro-pneumonia that occurred in Canada. As he was informed that this disease had absolutely died out, and as the United States now took Canadian store cattle, he asked the President of the Board of Agriculture to do what he had done with regard to the muzzling order, and remove these restrictions. The muzzling order did a great deal of good, and he was one of those who wished to see it persevered with until rabies had been absolutely wiped out. That had been done with the greatest success, and he maintained that this pleuro-pneumonia disease had now been stamped out in Canada, and it was very rare indeed in this country.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The hon. and learned Member for Dundee seems to think it was rather a hardship that, under the law of 1896, the President of the Board of Agriculture has no discretion in this matter. It is a fact, of course, that that Act does forbid the importation of store cattle from all countries in the world, but I can at once tell the hon. Member that if my hands were perfectly free, and if the Act left it to my discretion, I should as stoutly maintain the exclusion of store cattle from this country as I am obliged to do under the Act of 1896. I am absolutely convinced that, if we are to keep out disease from this country, the Act of 1896 must be maintained in all its completeness. The Amendment which the hon. Member has placed upon the Paper seems to convey the idea that only Canadian store cattle are excluded by the Act. A similar misconception, I think, prevails throughout the country, and to that extent a certain amount of prejudice has been created against it. That Act applies not only to Canada, but to stores from every portion of the world. Canada is suffering under no special grievance in this respect. We should all be anxious to show the utmost consideration to any of our Colonies, but, in this matter, Canada differs in no respect from other Colonies or foreign countries. On the other hand, with regard to the importation of fat cattle, Canada is in a position occupied by only two other countries—the United States and Argentina.

The question at issue between us does not turn on whether or not Canada is free from disease. For months I have admitted that Canada is free from disease, and it is on that ground, and that ground only, that Canada is allowed to export to this country fat cattle for immediate slaughter. But there is a vast distinction to be drawn between allowing fat cattle to come into our ports to be slaughtered within ten days of landing, and allowing store cattle not only to reach the wharves, but to go throughout the length and breadth of the land, possibly carrying disease wherever they go. So insidious are some of these cattle diseases, that foot-and-mouth disease, for instance, has actually spread from the quarantine wharf itself. If it has spread from the wharf, with all the safeguards there provided, what may be the danger if these store cattle are allowed to come in and go all over the country? We have no adequate means of knowing, and, especially in these large and thinly-populated countries, it is extremely difficult to know—in many cases their own Governments do not know—whether there is any disease. So difficult is it, even for the Governments of countries like Canada, the United States, or Argentina to know whether foot-and-mouth disease, for instance, does exist, that for months I have had to keep the ports of this country closed against Argentine cattle, because, although the Goverment of the Argentina issued an official report declaring the country to be free from disease, within two or three months of that notice it was proved, beyond a doubt, that foot-and-mouth disease did there exist. If cattle were allowed to come in as store cattle from countries where disease did exist, the danger to our herds and flocks would be very great indeed. An essential thing in this matter, whether from the point of view of the exporter, the importer, or the consumer, is that we should have a steady trade. That is almost as important as preventing the importation of disease. What is the suggestion in this case?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) made a remark which was inaudible in the Press Gallery.

MR. HANBURY: Then directly the hon. Member for East Norfolk succeeded in carrying his point, and stores from Canada were permitted to enter, we should have the hon. Member for Dundee coming forward and saying, "You cannot draw any distinction between Canada, the United States, and the Argentine; you must let in store cattle from every part of the world." That would be a most dangerous state of things. It would be sufficiently dangerous if we were to let in store cattle from Canada, because it is necessary in the interests of the consumer and of all parties concerned that this should be a steady trade. The desire of the Canadians to export fat stock has been considerably diminished by seeing disease suddenly break out in the United States. They are beginning to see that a steady trade, even for meat purposes, because it is steady, will answer their purposes a great deal better than that of live cattle. How much stronger is the argument in the case of stores than in the case even of live fat cattle. If disease breaks out in Canada they can, at any rate, export their dead meat, but if they have only one string to their bow the trade is at once upset, and the whole store supply comes to an end.

It is said that Canada is free from disease. So it is; but there is a country with a frontier running for thousands of miles coterminous with that of Canada where disease has broken out within the last two months. In the New England States foot-and-mouth disease suddenly broke out, and what guarantee have we, if it breaks out in such a country, it will not also break out in Canada? It has been said by several people that we ought to make an exception in the case of Canada because Canada is a Colony. I should be most anxious to meet the wishes of any of our Colonies, but, after all, disease is the same wherever it comes from, and it would do just as much harm in this country whether it came from Canada or from Germany. I cannot agree to treat any Colony exceptionally in this matter. But I will go further. I do not believe that if we opened our ports to-morrow to Canadian store cattle any considerable number would come in. Since the Act of 1896 the Canadians have found a much better way of making money, and that is to fatten their cattle on their own land, and send them over to this country as fat cattle. There is no doubt whatever that this is the case of the bulk of the Canadians at the present moment. Too much may be made of the number of Canadian cattle we used to receive. The figures have not yet been mentioned, but one would suppose from what has been said about the importance of Canadian stores to the graziers of this country that Canada sent us before 1892, when the ports were first closed against them, an enormous supply of store cattle. But what are the facts? Up to 1892 the largest number of cattle of all kinds sent from Canada in any one year was only 88,000, of which only 50,000 were store cattle. Has Canada suffered any injustice since the exclusion of store cattle, or has this country received fewer cattle from Canada? In the five years preceding the exclusion, 88,000 Canadian cattle per annum came to this country; in the ten years since then the number has been 98,000 per annum, so that there has been an actual increase of 10,000, or more than 10 per cent. In addition to this large increase of live cattle we have had an enormous increase of dead meat. In the year before the exclusion of store cattle, Canada was sending us only 370,000 cwt. of dead meat; in 1901 the amount was 722,000 cwt. Canada, then, has not suffered by the arrangement.

But what has been the state of things here in England? From whom does this complaint come? The consumer has had very little to say on the subject, if we except the hon. Member for Dundee, who wants not only Canadian, but store cattle from every country in the world to be allowed to come in, apparently forgetting the greatly increased price which the consumer would have to pay if any amount of disease broke out amongst our home stock. Who, then, are the people who complain? Not the generality of farmers, for I venture to say that 99 per cent. of the farmers of this country are dead against the Amendment of the hon. Member. We have heard what hon. Members from Ireland have to say on the subject, and I shall quote a few figures as to the number of store cattle from Ireland. The same might equally be said about Wales Do the great grazing counties, such as Leicestershire or Northamptonshire, ask that these cattle should be introduced? There is not a Member from either of those counties who will say there is any such desire. Then take the case for Scotland. My hon. friend the Member for Aberdeen was Chairman of the Scottish Conference last December, and it must be within his recollection that the Scottish farmers were at one time pressed to deal with the question, but on reflection it was found there was not by any means that unanimity, even in the grazing districts, that had been anticipated, and the resolution was struck off the agenda. There is not the same feeling in Scotland on the subject as there was a year or two ago. The hon. Member for East Norfolk alleges that he represents the county of Norfolk, and he declared that his opponent at the election took exactly the same view of the subject. I do not know whether his opponent had been long in Norfolk, but I do know that the question is not regarded with unanimity in the county. It is rather a battle between the large farmers and the small. It may pay the large farmers very well to get the Canadian stores, though I am told that even amongst them there is not the same unanimity as existed a short time ago. But amongst the small farmers there is absolute unanimity, and, although the hon. Member may very well represent the larger farmers of Norfolk, if he thinks he is doing the smaller farmers any kindness by this Motion I distinctly contradict him; he is doing them a very ill turn indeed. Then the hon. Member seemed to imply that the number of cattle in this country had decreased since the restriction was imposed.

MR. PRICE: No; you misunderstood me. I said the increase had been comparatively small.

MR. HANBURY: The increase since 1896 has been something like 500,000 on 10,000,000, and that I think is a very considerable increase. We have also had a considerable increase in the supply of store cattle. I have mentioned that the stores from Canada, even in the year when the largest number were sent, did not exceed 50,000. Take Ireland alone. Up to 1891 the average was 355,000; from 1897 to 1901, the average was 420,000, not only making up the deficiency from Canada, but giving us 20,000 to the good, and that increase is going on. And they are by no means bad stores. They are in every respect as good as Canadian stores, and with the means which are now being taken to improve the breed of cattle in Ireland, I believe Ireland will send us even better stores in the future. As to price, I admit that this year there has been an increase. But the circumstances are totally exceptional. We know what happened in America the year before last, that they had very few cattle to send over to this country, and that a great number of cattle were slaughtered in this country as fat cattle which perhaps ought not to have been slaughtered as such. I will take the price, not of a single year, but of, say, five years. It is somewhat difficult to get a return of prices. I wish the Board of Agriculture had better opportunities of getting such returns, and that I could get more assistance from the Treasury in the matter than I am likely to get, because it is a matter of considerable importance. I am able, however, to give these figures, as very accurate records have been kept in some districts. From 1887 to 1891 the price of stores was £9 1s. 6d.; two-year-olds, £12 18s. 4d.; from 1893 to 1897, £7 19s. 6d. and £11 18s.; from 1893 to 1899, £7 18s. 7d. and £11 14s. respectively, so that the price of stores is now £7 18s. 7d. as against £9 1s. 6d., and of two-year-olds £11 14s. as against £12 18s. 4d. That does not look as though the price has gone up.

Now I take the report of the Irish Agricultural Department, and I find that in the five years previous to 1892 the price of one-year-olds was £6 15s. 4d., in the succeeding five years £5 13s. 5d., and from 1897 to 1901 £6 14s. 3d. It is only natural that the price of Irish stores should have gone up, because for the first time they were coming in these large quantities to England. In the two-year-olds there has been a drop, the price in 1887 and 1891 being £9 8s., in the following five years £8 3s. 1d., and in the last five years £9 5s. 9d. The same thing happened with regard to three-year-olds. My argument is this: Although disease may not be existent in Canada at the present moment, we have no guarantee that it may not break out to-morrow, and we cannot afford to let our food supply depend on the mere chance of any country being free from disease in any one particular year. There is no hardship on the graziers of this country; they are getting as large and as good a supply of stores as they got before, and they are getting those stores at prices certainly not higher—indeed, in many respects they are lower—than before. Nothing whatever, therefore, will induce me, as long as I am Minister of Agriculture, to abate, by one jot or tittle, the stringency of the Act. I am quite certain that it is to the interest of the farmer and consumer alike that we should stand by that Act, and that we should do everything possible in our power to prevent disease coming into this country. As I have stood firm in the case of importation of fat stock from Argentina, and have refused to allow any to come into this country until I have been satisfied by the Argentine Government that there is no disease in their country, and that all adequate precautions are taken, so again I say that in the case of store cattle, I cannot depart one iota from the Act of 1896 and I will not, for the sake of this paltry number of 50,000 store cattle, which it is asked should be allowed to come in, but which graziers do not want, sacrifice the health of 11,000,000 of cattle in this country, and so enhance the price to the consumer.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) said this was a matter in which he had long taken considerable interest. The effect of this Amendment, if carried, would be to repeal, so far as the importation of Canadian cattle was concerned, the Diseases of Animals Act, 1896. He noticed that the right hon. Gentleman, speaking a short time ago in Scotland, said that that Act was passed with very little opposition, and with the consent of both sides of the House. He was unhappily at issue with the right hon. Gentleman in that statement. He challenged it, and he said that very few Acts had been passed through that House that had been more keenly contested and more bitterly fought than was the short Act of 1896. In particular he well remembered it being remarked by the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Local Government Board, who then occupied the position which the right hon. Gentleman now filled, that, although at that time there was no disease in Canada, and very little, if any, in England, there was rinderpest in Rhodesia, and that therefore the right hon. Gentleman had better take his Bovine Bill to Buluwayo. The Act of 1896 was not passed to prevent disease. It was passed to prevent the importation of healthy animals into this country, and to scotch the competition which resulted therefrom. If the House had realised—if hon. Members who were Free Traders had realised—the results of the passing of that Act, they would not have acquiesced in it, and the majority which supported it would not have been so large as it was. The Act of 1896 was one of those agricultural Acts which, in his humble judgment, were rather Protective in their tendencies. That had been practically admitted by the right hon. Gentleman, because, speaking at Edinburgh a short time back, he admitted that there was no disease in Canada, but stated that the first thing that would happen, if Canadian Store cattle were permitted to enter this country, would be that the price of English stores—and no doubt in that he intended to include the Scotch and Irish—would fall to the market price of Canadian stores. After an admission like that it was impossible to deny that this Act was Protective in its tendencies. If the opening of the ports would have the effect of reducing the price of store cattle, then he said that the effect of keeping them closed was to maintain the price over and above the level at which it would otherwise stand. Under these Protective Acts the working classes and the consumer were, so to speak, between the upper and the nether millstone.

Already the prices of tea, tobacco, corn, and sugar had been increased. A Margarine Act had been passed to protect our butter industry, and the Diseases of Animals Act protected the meat supply. Thus every staple article of food which the working man consumed was enhanced in price, either by taxation or by the restrictive and Protective Acts of the present Government. He had refreshed his memory by referring to the debates of 1896. The House would be aware that prior to that time it was open to the Government to permit the importation of live stock from abroad. Now, under the Act of 1896 all animals had to be slaughtered at the ports. He remembered arguing that the result of the Act would be to increase the price of meat. But, "No," said the right hon. Gentleman the then President of the Board of Trade, now President of the Local Government Board, "we expect there will be such a development of cattle breeding in this country as will more than make up any loss we may sustain under this Act, and the price of meat will be reduced instead of increased." But was it likely that the scotching and prevention of competition was going to reduce the price of meat? If it were, why not refuse to admit wheat and thus reduce its price. The right hon. Gentleman had put forward some very specious arguments, and had quoted certain figures, but he only went back to 1896.

MR. HANBURY: Oh, yes. I went back to 1892.

MR. WHITELEY said he was not present during the earlier part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech and therefore did not hear that. But the figures relating to 1896 he did hear quoted, and he ventured to assert that if the right hon. Gentleman had taken the statistics for 1893 he would have presented a very different picture to the House. In that year the stock of cattle in this country was 11,207,000, and

Mr. George Whiteley.

that number had only risen to 11,376,000 at the period for which the right hon. Gentleman quoted figures. The total increase in our herds of cattle in this country was only 169,000, or one and a half per cent. during ten years. But during that time the population had increased four or five per cent., so that the increase in the number of cattle was by no means commensurate with the increase of people. With regard to prices, it would not be denied that the tendency had been to increase rather than decrease; indeed, during the past year, absolutely famine prices had obtained in the meat trade, although they had gone down somewhat since. At any rate, on the whole, the price of meat was higher now than it was ten years ago, and there was no possibility of its falling. The assertion, therefore, that this Act had not been protective in its effect was dissipated by those figures. The Act was passed on the strength of false arguments. All the prophecies and prognostications by which it was supported in that House had been falsified. It was built upon an unsound and unsubstantial basis. It had proved protective. It had not reduced the price of meat; it had tended to increase it. It had not been followed by any appreciable increase in the number of stores in this country; on the contrary there had been a material decrease in proportion to population. In view of those facts he put it to the House whether it was not time to depart from that cast-iron, hide-bound policy of excluding healthy competition.

They heard a good deal nowadays about Imperialism, and some of them thought it was rather a sham and pinchbeck kind of Imperialism. They had also heard statesmen advocating the policy of the Zollverein. Not long ago they were willing to accept the assistance of Canada in the great conflict in which this Empire was engaged. They took all the assistance she was willing to render, so far as men were concerned. The cry was "let them all come." But now it was a case of "no bullocks need apply." We had in this country a large proportion of the population out of employment, a proportion which had little chance of buying meat. Yet the policy of the Government was to increase the price of meat, and, although there was an excellent supply of that article of food in Canada, which the Canadians were anxious to send us, and we were willing to accept, the Government refused to allow it to come in. It was a case of Protection as between the breeder and the feeder, if not between Canada and England. There was an excellent supply of strong healthy cattle which, for years, had been more healthy than our English herds; yet the Government, on behalf of the breeders and agriculturists of this country, elected to exclude that supply from our shores. He appealed to Free Traders, he appealed to all who had the interests of the consumer at heart, to allow, in the interests of the working people, the importation of this healthy supply of food.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.) said the hon. Member who last spoke had stated that he was appealing to the Free Traders of the country. Well, he himself had been much longer a Free Trader than the hon. Member.

MR. WHITELEY: No, no.

*SIR EDWARD STRACHEY said that if his hon. friend had been so long a Free Trader he must have felt that he was in very uncongenial company when he was sitting on the other side of the House. Why did he not object to the action of the Liberal Government of 1892 in refusing to allow store cattle from Canada to be brought into this country? It was entirely due to the action of the late Liberal Government, acting through Mr. Herbert Gardner, who was then President of the Board of Agriculture, that that step was taken. Up till 1892, through the slackness of previous Governments, pleuro-pneumonia and foot and mouth disease had been very prevalent in this country. Indeed, Professor Brown, the professional adviser of the Board of Agriculture, said that it had existed continuously here for more than fifty years. Thanks to the Liberal Government, that state of things was practically put an end to, and there had been only a small number of isolated outbreaks since that time. It was quite clear why the Board of Agriculture had desired to turn what was only statutory obligation into a legislative obligation. They wished permanently to exclude store cattle coming from abroad for the reason that those cattle were a constant source of disease, so that Britain and Ireland were never free of it, for as often as it was stamped out so surely was it imported again from abroad. It was clear that the Board of Agriculture had felt that the pressure put upon it was enormous, because anyone who read the official correspondence between Lord Ripon, the then Colonial Secretary, and Mr. Herbert Gardner from 1892 to 1894 would see the enormous pressure that was brought to bear upon him by the Colonial Office. Letter after letter was written by the High Commissioner of Canada to Lord Ripon, urging that the restrictions should be withdrawn. The pressure was so great that the then President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Gardner) appointed a Departmental Committee to inquire into the question, and the conclusion come to by that body, largely on the evidence of experts, showed that it was perfectly well known to English veterinary surgeons that the diagnosis of pleuro-pneumonia was extremely difficult. That was the argument that was used by the Board of Agriculture in 1893, in order to resist the pressure put upon it by Canada. Canada then, as now, declared that there was no disease at all in the Dominion, and that pleuro-pneumonia did not exist. But after the most careful investigation the Departmental Committee came to the conclusion that it did exist, and it was impossible to allow Canadian store cattle to be introduced into this country, for unless the prohibition was insisted upon, it would not be possible to keep our flocks and herds free from foot-and-mouth disease and pleuro-pneumonia. Mr. Gardner and the then Liberal Government therefore resisted the pressure put upon him by Canada. The Conservative Government, when they introduced the permanent Act, did so, it might be supposed, to help them to resist the same kind of pressure by the Colonial Office. It had been difficult for Mr. Gardner to resist the pressure of Lord Ripon. Would it not have been more difficult, if not impossible, for Mr. Walter Long, the then President of the Board of Agriculture, to have resisted Mr. Chamberlain, then, as now, the Colonial Secretary, and all-powerful?

It had been suggested by one of the speakers that the Act of 1896 was opposed by the entire Liberal Party, but he had looked up the Debates and he found that the number of Members who voted against the Bill, on the Motion for the Third Reading was only seventy-five. He also found on examining the reports on the Debates on the Second Reading that several Liberal Members representing agricultural constituencies voted for and not against the Bill. It was clear, therefore, that the Liberal Party was not united on the point, especially when they found so representative a man as the Member for the South Molton Division of Devonshire supporting the Act. He noticed a curious contradiction in the speech of the hon. Member for Berwickshire, who, in opposing the Act, said that if the price of store cattle increased so did the price of meat. But the hon. Member went on to say that the feeders had been unable to make any profit of late. What did that mean? It meant that when the price of store stock went up the price of fat stock did not go up in proportion, and, consequently, they lost on the fat beasts, because the butchers gave no more for them, though the feeder had to pay more for lean beasts. Really, the whole quarrel was simply between, on the one hand, a small number of feeders of foreign store cattle in this country—men who wanted to have cheap store cattle—a comparatively small minority of farmers in East Anglia, in the North of England, and in Scotland, and on the other hand, the great bulk of the farmers of England, Wales, and Ireland. It had nothing to do with the question of the price of meat. Since 1896 the average price had not increased. It was suggested that it increased last year, but that was owing to the American trust, and, as a matter of fact, the price of meat had fallen considerably at the present moment. The hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment declared that the Act had been a failure, but he did not tell them on what grounds he based that assertion. The only way in which it could have been a failure would have been by not succeeding in stamping out foot-and-mouth disease and pleuro-pneumonia. But it had done that. Those of them who lived in the West of England knew well what a terrible state of things prevailed during the middle part of the past century, when whole districts were ruined, when thousands of men lost their means of living, and great destitution prevailed in various parts. They were told that this was a question affecting Protection and Free Trade. To his mind it was only a question of protection from disease. If it were a question of permanently increasing the price of food of the people, he for one would be ready to run some risk in the matter, but it had been proved by the President of the Board of Agriculture that this had not been the case. Taking an average of years, the price of meat had not increased. An enormous increase of the amount of meat which came into this country frozen or chilled, takes the place of the store cattle before imported, in fact we got just as much meat, if not more, from abroad, but in the shape of dead or fat beasts instead of in the form of store beasts.

MR. H. BROADHURST (Leicester) said he understood the President of the Board of Agriculture to say that in the whole of Leicestershire there had been no voice heard in favour of the Amendment of his hon. friend.

MR. HANBURY: From the farmers.

MR. BROADHURST: There were other people in Leicestershire besides farmers. There were 230,000 of a working population in the borough of Leicester, and from that borough he had presented petitions again and again in favour of repealing the restrictions against the importation of store cattle. He did not think the President of the Board of Agriculture made any great point when he said that the hon. Member for Dundee would admit store cattle from other countries than Canada. Cattle should be admitted from any country where there were healthy beasts. No one proposed to admit cattle with disease among them. The right hon. Gentleman had quoted a number of figures to show what had been the variation in the price of store cattle. He should like to know on what principle the right hon. Gentleman selected the districts from which he obtained his figures.

MR. HANBURY: The sets of figures I have quoted were the only figures I could lay my hands on. There was a record kept by the Farmers' Association, and the figures showed the official reports in regard to Irish store cattle.

MR. BROADHURST said he feared there was very great inaccuracy in compiling these figures. He was frequently in the Castle Hill live-stock market of the city of Norwich, to which cattle were admitted from all parts, and if he was correctly informed store cattle had fallen between £2 and £3 per head since the passing of the Act of 1896. There had been constant objections taken to the Act on the ground that it was calculated to enhance the price of meat. In Leicester the co-operative society and tradesmen who distributed food to thousands of people declared that it had increased the price of meat, and, therefore, they were in favour of the repeal of the restrictions. There was no necessity for the Act except to save labour to the Department. The Department could always and instantly have stopped the importation of diseased cattle. If the Department had no better sources of information than the War Office had for other purposes, he could understand that it might exist in a state of ignorance as to the condition of cattle in other countries. There should be no difficulty in getting warning at once of the spread of foot-and-mouth disease or lung disease in Canada, or any other civilised country. We had consuls and representatives all over the world for the purpose of furnishing us with information. It was a ridiculous, nonsensical, cast-iron policy to keep out store cattle from all countries whether disease existed in those countries or not. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted that it was difficult to get statistics which were reliable, and that the means of collecting them were uncertain and inefficient. That was a confession of incompetency which really made the House suspicious of the other reasons, excuses, and apologies which had been constantly offered by the Department on this and other questions relating to agriculture.

He was not a farmer. He wished he was. He lived among farmers and was constantly associating with them. He was informed that the Irish store cattle, at any rate on the north-east coast of Britian, were nothing like so profitable to the farmer as the animals from America or Canada. They were a much smaller class of beast as a rule. They lived on much richer pasture in Ireland than the cattle of Canada or America, and therefore when they came to the bleak north-east coast—the feeding part of Great Britain—they did not fatten with anything like the rapidity, or with anything like the same profit to the farmer as cattle from the prairie-lands across the Atlantic. That was one of the great complaints of the north-east farmer against Irish stores. Do not let the right hon. Gentleman imagine that anybody wanted to run risks. Exclude everything about which there was the suspicion of disease, but, pray, allow common-sense to rule, and not the hard-and-fast line which had been laid down and which could not be altered. The right hon. Gentleman could not go down to the city of Norwich and meet a buyer of store cattle who would agree with him that they had not advanced more than £1 per head, otherwise he was entirely misinformed. He had no rents to reduce, and he believed it to be gospel truth what these men told him—that since 1896 the increase in the price of store cattle was more than 40s. per head in most cases, while the animals purchased were nothing like so profitable or so well suited to the climate as the class they were in the habit of purchasing before. On behalf of the consumers who had again and again petitioned the House against the restrictions, he protested against the exclusion of healthy and profitable store cattle from Canada or any other part of the world.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire) said that as representing a county particularly interested in this question he might be allowed to make one or two remarks on the speech of the President of the Board of Agriculture. The fault they found with the right hon. Gentleman was that he had not confidence enough in himself and in his power to exclude diseased cattle without a law binding him to do so. His predecessors were perfectly able to do so. One of his predecessors actually, for a year at least, excluded Canadian cattle when there was every reason to believe that there was no disease whatever in Canada. The right hon. Gentleman had asked why they spoke of Canada. They took the Canadian case because it was a clear one. There was no disease whatever in Canada at present, and most of them thought there never was. They saw no reason why cattle from that part of the world should not be admitted. They disapproved of the Act because the great industry in the feeding and fattening of cattle had been detrimentally affected by it. The right hon. Gentleman had given the House some statistics which were most striking. He questioned the accuracy of those statistics, and he would give the right hon. Gentleman this challenge. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the way he went about visiting different districts of the country, and he wished to know whether he would go down to Aberdeenshire or Kincardineshire and tell the farmers, as he had told the House, that store cattle were never imported in any great number. The right hon. Gentleman knew that such a statement would be laughed out of court.

What really ran through the whole argument was the idea of Protection. Even the right hon. Gentleman himself, while he did not use protective arguments, appealed to the breeders throughout the country, and he also appealed to hon. Gentlemen from Ireland. The hon. Member wished no harm to the breeding industry, which was larger than the feeding one, but it was perfectly impossible for this country to breed all the cattle that the consumer required. If we could not breed all the cattle we required, how were we going to supplement the supply? It must be done either by importing dead meat or store cattle. This Act prevented the importation of store cattle. The consequence was that the importation of dead meat had been increased, and the profit which formerly went to the farmers of Kincardineshire, who used to fatten store cattle, now went to Canada. The right hon. Gentleman might contemplate that as a thing not to be regretted, but he could assure him that in his constituency it was regretted very much indeed. He was sorry that this debate had been more or less a dispute between breeders and feeders. It ought to be a consumers' question. Petitions had been received from various co-operative societies throughout the country in favour of the removal of the present restrictions on the importation of Canadian cattle. In the interest of consumers as well as feeders it was of the greatest importance that the Act should be repealed.

Mr. MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid) congratulated the President of the Board of Agriculture on the statement he had made. In his opinion the right hon. Gentleman had not shown any want of self-reliance such as the hon. Member for Kincardineshire seemed to think. No new argument had been heard in support of the Amendment now before the House. The statistics submitted by the right hon. Gentleman showed clearly that the Act, instead of being an injury to consumers and feeders, had been a benefit to them. Feeders had more stores to-day than they had before the Act was passed, while there was more meat coming into the country now than then. Even if at the present moment the price of meat was high that was not due to the effect of the Act. It was due to the failure of the maize crop in the United States last year. He did not think that the hon. Gentleman who had proposed the Amendment had presented anything that was really tangible in support of it. For his part, he believed that instead of the Act of 1896 having done any injury, it had done a great deal of good. It had stimulated the breeding of cattle in Ireland, and had encouraged the farmers there to extend the industry, and to send to this country a class of animals which were well fitted to finish up their fattening here. From the figures produced by the Minister of Agriculture they saw that the number of store cattle from Ireland had increased by many thousands per annum, that the class of animals was superior to what it formerly was, and that it was improving every year. Now that the new Department of Agriculture had been established in Ireland, they might hope that the improvement in numbers and quality would be more than maintained; and, in fact, he thought that the industry was only really in its infancy in Ireland. It would be a sad thing if anything were done by this House to hinder the development of that industry, and the improvement of Irish cattle. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture on the firm attitude he had taken up in this matter. The right hon. Gentleman had clearly shown that the Act passed in 1896 had been beneficial; that it had not only stamped out disease but had secured this country against the danger of its re-introduction, while it had given a stimulus to the breeding industry in the sister island. The firm stand which the Minister of Agriculture had taken, and the unwavering character of his language, had shown the people of Ireland that in him they had got a good solid friend.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said that notwithstanding the arguments they had heard from the feeders and those hon. Members who said they represented the consumers, he congratulated the Minister of Agriculture on the firm attitude he had maintained in regard to this question. If any man could claim credit for single devotion to duty, and ability in the discharge of his work, it was that right hon. Gentleman. He was speaking from a long experience of the right hon. Gentleman in different Departments of Administration. No one more effectually went down to the bed-rock of every question he had grappled with than the right hon. Gentleman, who had, therefore, gone to the bed-rock of the matter under discussion. They had heard a good deal about Irish store cattle, but nothing of Highland cattle. There were large tracts of land in the Highlands now used as deer forests, which should be devoted to the rearing of cattle. That would be the very best way of keeping the population in the country. If they introduced store cattle from Canada and every other country, which would soon be distributed all over the land, how could they arrest the progress of disease if it once broke out. He had too much regard for the small farmers and crofters who had a few cows, stirks, young beasts and sheep to sanction anything by which that risk would be run The interests of the small farmers and crofters, and not that of the feeders should be first considered. Apart from that, if access were only given to the land tens of thousand more cattle would be reared in the Highlands than at present. This was a great national question, from the point of view that it would keep the people on the land. An hon. Member had spoken of a great meeting held in Westminster to protest against the Act of 1896; but those who attended that meeting represented the large farmers, a few landlords, the shipping trade, the butchers, and co-operative societies. No small farmers had been represented there. The Secretary to the High Commissioner for Canada had admitted that the cattle were now sent over from Canada in a fattened state, and that the volume of trade had actually increased in spite of the restrictions imposed by the Act of 1896. It had been suggested, and he agreed with the suggestion, that the destruction of calves should be stopped, so that they might grow up into full-sized cattle to yield food for the people.

*MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough) said that he considered the Act of 1896 as Protection in its worst form, and he protested on behalf of his constituents against a measure which excluded from this country the food of the people and imposed upon them great hardships. The right hon. Gentleman the Minister of Agriculture had honoured Leicester with a visit and made a very interesting speech, in which he told the farmers it would be useless to clamour for Protection, it was like crying for the moon. He met a farmer, who, after hearing the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture, said—

> "I admire the Minister for Agriculture who evidently intends to continue his system of Protection and call it by another name! We farmers will encourage him to put a tax on corn, for that is not Protection but registration! Then the right hon. Gentleman excludes cattle, and the people will go on paying us farmers higher prices in every direction for their food!"

The Irish people were now raising their voices and saying that they were making money by the exclusion of cattle from Canada. He had every wish to do justice to the breeders of Ireland, but at the same time they must do justice to the majority of the people of this country who had a hard struggle to obtain the necessary food, because employment was precarious and wages were low. They knew that the Government would not accept the Amendment, but would continue their system of Protection to bolster up a few industries and to help the large farmers, while they regarded the great majority of the people as worthy of but little consideration. It was said that the Act of 1896 had stamped out disease, but in his opinion it had not done so. He believed that an improved system of inspection and isolation had been the means of stamping out disease. Methods had been adopted by which information could be given to the Minister of Agriculture if disease amongst cattle had broken out in any part of the world; and if there was no disease in Canada and in other cattle-breeding countries—and if there was thorough inspection of the country—why should they not permit the introduction into Great Britain of cattle from any country? He earnestly hoped that his hon. friend would go to a division, and if he did so he would support him with every satisfaction, knowing that he would be acting in the interests of the great majority of the people, and at the same time doing no injustice to the cattle breeders.

MR. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich) said he took an altogether different view of this question from that of the Minister of Agriculture. In his opinion it did no good to the country to tax raw material. They admitted free fat cattle and dead meat, and yet excluded the raw material to make into beef. Moreover, by excluding raw materials the production of bye-products was prevented, and a very considerable industry was crippled. He did not think that the past few years since the Act was passed were a safe criterion for the future. These years had, in the main, been dry seasons, and there had been little or no grass; but he remembered when there was more grass than cattle to eat it, and that was a sort of thing that might come about again. His principal objection to the Act was that it really taxed the raw material of an important industry. An hon. friend had advocated that the killing of all the calves should be stopped, but he did not think that would recommend itself to the people of England, for where would they then get their veal and ham pie? That was no remedy at all.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid) said he congratulated the right hon. the President of the Board of Agriculture on the firm stand he had taken in this matter. In his own constituency they sent over large numbers of store cattle to England, and breeding had become one of their most important industries. He therefore very strongly supported the attitude adopted by the right hon. Gentleman, and hoped he would adhere to his decision.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 38; Noes, 190. (Division List No. 8.)

AYES.

Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H
Causton, Richard Knight
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hope John Deans (*Fife, West*
Horniman, Frederick John
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Levy, Maurice
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Partington, Oswald
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs*)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer,RtHnC.R.(*Northants*)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas,David Alfred(*Merthyr*
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Wason,Eugene(*Clackmannan*)
White, George *Norfolk*)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (*Durham Mid.*)

Tellers for the Ayes—
Mr. Price and Dr. Farquharson.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boland, John
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain,Rt.Hn.J A (*Worc*
Charrington, Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig,CharlesCurtis(Antrim,S.
Cranborne, Viscount
Crean, Eugene
Cross, H. Shepherd (*Bolton*)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cullinan, J.
Davenport, William Bromley-
Delany, William
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Jos. C.
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duffy, William J.
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Edwards, Frank
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Ffrench, Peter
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzroy, Hon. Edw. Algernon
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore, Hon. G. R. C. Ormsby-
Gray, Ernest (*West Ham*)
Greene, W. Raymond- (*Cambs*
Gretton John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld.G.(*Midx*
Hamilton, Marq. of (*Londondy*
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robt. Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent,Ashfd*
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harrington, Timothy
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hope, J. F. (*Sheff., B'tside*)
Hoult, Joseph
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Johnstone, Heywood
Joyce, Michael
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.(*Salop*
Keswick, William
Knowles, Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockie, John
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*)

Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, W. J H (*Dumfriesshire*
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (*Hants.*)
More, Robt. Jasper (*Shropshire*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Mount, William Arthur
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth South*)
O'Brien, Kendal (*Tipperary Mid*
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Donnell, T. (*Kerry, W.*)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (*Roscommon, N.*
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Lieut.-Col. Richard
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Power, Patrick Joseph
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (*Waterford*)
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (*Stalybridge*
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Russell, T. W.
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Smith, H C (*North'mb Tyneside*
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (*Ormskirk*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stock, James Henry
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C E H (*Sheffield*)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*)
Webb, Colonel William George
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*
Whiteley, H. (*Ashton und. Lyne*
Williams, Colonel R. (*Dorset*)
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York, E. R.*)
Wilson, J. W. (*Worcestersh. N.*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther

Main Question again proposed.

Debate arising.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) moved the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned"—(*Sir Howard Vincent*).

Put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

BANK HOLIDAYS (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) moved the Second Reading of the Bill, but it appearing that it was not yet printed, the debate was adjourned till To-morrow.

LIGHT LOCOMOTIVES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

COAL EXPORTS, ETC.

Return ordered, "giving, for the year 1902, the export of coal from each port in the United Kingdom to each country abroad, together with summary statements showing the export of coal in every period of three months from the principal districts of the United Kingdom to the principal groups of foreign countries; and also showing the quantity of coal shipped at each port in the United Kingdom for ships' use on foreign voyages during the like periods (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 138, of Session 1902."—(*Mr. David Thomas.*)

Adjourned at ten minutes before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 26th February, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

HASTINGS HARBOUR DISTRICT RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

Presented; read 1ª, and referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INEBRIATES ACTS.

Supplement to the report of the inspector under the Inebriates Acts for the year 1901, being a collection of British, Colonial, and Foreign Statutes relating to the penal and reformatory treatment of habitual inebriates.

TREATY SERIES, No. 3 (1903).

Accession of the Empire of Kona to the convention signed at Geneva, 22nd August, 1864, for the amelioration of the condition of the wounded in armies in the field.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Further correspondence relating to affairs in South Africa (in continuation of [Cd. 1163.], July 1902).

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

LAND TRANSFER (STATUTORY RULES AND ORDERS).

Rules, dated 10th February 1903.

BANK OF ENGLAND.

Annual accounts of Exchequer Bills and other Government Securities purchased for the year ended 5th January 1903.

DUCHY OF CORNWALL.

Account of the receipts and disbursements of the Duchy of Cornwall in the year ended 31st December 1902.

POLLING DISTRICTS.

Orders made by the County Council of—The county of Middlesex; the county of Lancaster (two orders); the county of Southampton; altering certain polling districts in the said counties.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

Parliamentary Elections (Amendment) Act, 1902; Women's Franchise Act, 1902. [No. 54.]

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LIGHT LOAD LINE.

The Lord Shand added to the Select Committee.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 26th February, 1903.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Kirkintilloch; Kirkcolm; Northmadine; Botriphine; Leswalt; Rothes; and, Greenock; to lie upon the Table.

SALE AND USE OF TOBACCO AMONG JUVENILES.

Petition from Chorley, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

BRITISH MUSEUM.

Petition of the Trustees of the British Museum [King's Recommendation signified], for grant in aid; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INEBRIATES ACTS 1879 TO 1899 (RULES FOR RETREATS) (IRELAND).

Return [presented 17th February] to be printed. [No. 38.]

ARTHUR ALFRED LYNCH.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 23rd February; *Sir Alexander Acland-Hood*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 39.]

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

BREWERS' LICENCES.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 24th February; *Mr. Hayes Fisher*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 40.]

SOUTH AFRICA.

Copy presented, of Further Correspondence relating to Affairs in South Africa [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Chinese War Indemnity — International Currency Conference.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Chinese War Indemnity debit to the American Government is to be paid in silver by agreement; whether the gold standard European countries' claim will remain unpaid; and whether any communication has been received from President Roosevelt suggesting an international conference upon this currency question.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) In answer to the first part of the hon. Member's Question I have to say that His Majesty's Government are not aware that any such agreement has been come to. As regards the second part of the Question, I have to say that the claims are in process of payment. The answer to the third part of the Question is in the negative.

Bills Affecting Local Administration — Sanction by House of Commons.

MR. FIELD: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will consider the advisability of making a rule that all Bills affecting the administrative conditions of boroughs, cities, towns, and urban districts shall in future be first submitted to the House of Commons.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) Under existing Standing Orders it is impossible to give effect to the suggestion of the hon. Member that all Private Bills shall first be submitted to the House of Commons; and I am not prepared, without further consideration, to recommend an Amendment of the Standing Order which would effect the change in the system of Private Bill legislation which the hon. Member appears to desire.

Cancer in India—Statistics

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is now in a position to give statistics in regard to the prevalence of cancer in India.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) I have ascertained from the Viceroy that in the existing condition of death registration in India he is unable to furnish information which would justify any conclusions as to the prevalence or distribution of cancer among the general population. The Government of India are considering the advisability of requiring cases of cancer to be recorded separately in future in the dispensary and hospital returns.

Indian Government Railways—Automatic brakes and Passengers' Intercommunication.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is yet in a position to say whether arrangements have been made for the more general adoption of the automatic brake and system of intercommunication with the guard on passenger trains of the Indian Government Railways.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) As regards the adoption of automatic brakes, the report on the progress in the introduction of, and results of working automatic vacuum brakes in India during the six months ended the 30th June, 1902, has been received. Compared with the previous half-year there was no increase of braked vehicles, but a considerable improvement in the results of working them. The Government of India were asked in January last to furnish any information they may be able to supply as to the adoption of a system of intercommunication between passengers and guards on Indian railways, but no reply has yet been received.

Khairpur Currency

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will say whether a scheme for the conversion of the Khairpur currency has yet been arranged; and on what conditions the Native State rupee is accepted by the Khairpur State Treasury.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) So far as I am aware, the scheme has not yet been arranged. I have nothing to add to the answer which I gave the hon. Member on the 11th December.†

German Locomotives for East Indian Railways.

COLONEL DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs): To ask the Secretary of State for India, in view of his reply on 30th October, 1902,‡ in answer to a Question to the effect that deliveries of locomotives ordered from German contractors by the East Indian Railway Company were in arrear, will he now state what is the present condition of affairs; and whether the policy of giving this order to German contractors was submitted to, and sanctioned by, him before being put into effect.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) As regards the present condition of affairs, I am unable to give the information for which the hon. Member asks. The policy of the Board, so long as they keep within their agreement, is not a matter with which the Secretary of State can legitimately interfere.

Government of India—Separation of Judicial and Executive Duties.

MR. CAINE (Cornwall, Camborne): To ask the Secretary of State for India what reply has been received from the Government of India to the memorial signed by the Right Honourable Lord Hobhouse and others, praying for the separation of judicial and executive duties in India, presented through the India Office in August, 1899, and forwarded to the Government of India for consideration; upon which, as stated by him on 13th March last,§ the Government of India had been consulting the local Governments.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) No reply has yet been received. The matter is still under the consideration of the Government of India.

India—Value of Agricultural Productions.

MR. CAINE: To ask the Secretary of State for India if he has yet received a copy of the official Memorandum prepared by the Viceroy of India from figures collected for the Famine Commission of 1898, showing the latest estimate of the value of agricultural production in India, from which the Viceroy, in a speech to his Council on 28th March, 1901, estimated the average agricultural income per head at 20 rupees; and, if so, would he lay it upon the Table of the House, and print it for circulation as a Parliamentary Paper.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) I have received the Memorandum in question, but I do not propose to publish it.

Agricultural Population of India—Report by Lord Dufferin.

MR. CAINE: To ask the Secretary of State for India when he intends to publish the Report on an Inquiry, instituted by Lord Dufferin in 1888, into the condition of the agricultural population of India, which he promised to the House on 30th January, 1902.†

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) I have received the Report; it is very bulky, and it is fifteen years old. I doubt if it is worth the expense of publication, but if the hon. Gentleman presses for it I will not refuse to lay it upon the Table of the House.

Post Office Telephones—Delay at Paddington.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthenshire, W.): To ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that the Post Office authorities about eighteen months ago laid telephonic wires through certain parts of the Paddington district, and that the houses in the district have not yet been connected with the wires, and whether, in view of the inconvenience caused to the residents, he will give instructions to have the work completed as soon as possible; and will he state when it is proposed to complete the telephonic system in the district referred to.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxvi., 902.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxiii., 1192.

§ See (4) *Debates*, civ., 1266.

† See (4) *Debates*, ci., 1323.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The underground wires referred to by the hon. Member are to be connected with a new exchange which is being established in Bird Street, Oxford Street, and will be known as the Mayfair Exchange. Unexpected difficulties occurred in the acquisition of the premises in which the exchange is to be situated, but the necessary structural alterations were begun in the autumn, and the Office of Works expect that they will be completed in about four months. The installation of the switchboard will then be at once taken in hand, and must, I fear, occupy four or five months more. I will do everything in my power to hasten the opening of this exchange.

Delay of Telegrams between Wolverhampton and Belfast.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been called to the delay of certain telegrams between Wolverhampton and Belfast last Saturday in connection with a football match; and whether he will make inquiries into the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I am making inquiries in this case and will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Ballyshannon Postal Service.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that letters which should have been delivered at Ballyshannon at 8.30 a.m. on the 18th February were not delivered till 11.30 on that day; and whether, seeing that there is a line of railway through the district which the mail car traverses, he will take steps to improve the postal service at Ballyshannon, and secure expedition in the delivery of letters by causing their carriage to be by rail instead of by mail car.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I will make inquiry as to the delay in delivery of letters at Ballyshannon referred to by the hon. Member, and also as to the possibility of improving the postal service to that place, and I will communicate the result to him as soon as possible, but the inquiry will probably occupy some time.

South African War—Government Aid to Loyal Refugees in England.

MR. BUTCHER (York): To ask the Postmaster General, as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Rev. Arthur J. Bulmer, Congregational Minister of Zeerust, Transvaal, and for some time Acting Chaplain to His Majesty's Forces, was arrested by the Boers at the commencement of the late war for remaining loyal to the British Government, and was kept in prison for three months, that his home was destroyed, and that his wife and family were compelled, after suffering privations, to come over to England for refuge; and whether the Government will take steps to enable these and other loyal refugees, who are destitute of means, to return to their homes and relatives in South Africa.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain, for the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*) The case of Mr. Bulmer has not been brought before the Colonial Office. It is impossible to lay down any general rule for the treatment of such cases, but any applications made to the Department are referred to Lord Milner for his recommendations.

Foreign Seamen discharged in England—Amendment of the Merchant Shipping Act.

COLONEL SADLER (Middlesbrough): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will consider the advisability of amending the Merchant Shipping Act to enable a colonial seaman to recover in a summary manner the cost of his journey home if he is discharged in Great Britain, in the same way as is provided by Section 186 of the Act for British seamen when they are discharged abroad.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) No Amendment of the Merchant Shipping Act in the direction suggested by my hon. and gallant friend would appear to be necessary, as the position of a colonial seaman whose service terminates at a port in His Majesty's Dominions is the same as that of a seaman belonging to the United Kingdom who is discharged in similar circumstances. Section 186 of the Act only applies to seamen discharged at ports outside His Majesty's dominions.

Trade and Navigation Returns—Delay in Reprinting.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that the issue of the monthly Trade and Navigation Returns for January, and printed on 7th February, was exhausted by the 9th, and that the public were not able to obtain further copies until about the 20th instant; if he can say how many copies were printed at the first issue, and whether the number was limited owing to no order having been made by the House of Commons for their printing; and, seeing the pressure to which Customs officials are put in getting these Returns out with regularity on the 7th of the month following that to which they relate, will he take steps to provide that in future they are fully available to the public on that date, whether or not Parliament is in session.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I am informed that, owing to an unusual demand for the January issue of the monthly Accounts of Trade and Navigation of the United Kingdom, the stock was exhausted on the 9th instant; that a further supply was available by mid-day on the 10th, and that this in turn was exhausted on or about the 17th. A further supply was available on the 19th instant, which is not yet exhausted. The number at first issued seems to have been in accordance with the usual practice when no order to print has been made by the House, but I will take steps to ensure that a sufficient number of these Accounts shall always be available in future, whether Parliament is sitting or not.

Treaty between United States and Cuba—Effect on British Trade in the West Indies.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government have made any representations, either to the Government of Cuba or to that of the United States, as to the effect of the Reciprocity Treaty made between those two States and already signed, upon British trade and upon the sugar industry in the West Indies; and, if not, whether they will make such representations before that Treaty is ratified.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) The reply to the first Question is in the affirmative.

Bribery at Shrewsbury—Report of Commissioner.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): To ask Mr. Attorney General whether he has received the Report of the Commissioner appointed to inquire into the charges of bribery and corruption arising out of the recent municipal election at Shrewsbury; and whether he proposes to take action thereon; and will the Report be laid upon the Table.

(*Answered by Sir Robert Finlay.*) I have not yet received the Report of the Commissioner; but a copy was yesterday obtained by the Director of Public Prosecutions, and the whole matter is now under consideration.

Funds of Trades Unions—Exemption from Income Tax.

MR. MARTIN (Worcestershire, Droitwich): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether any portion of the funds of trades unions that are or may be made applicable to the general purposes of a union, and are not specifically earmarked or assigned to its charitable purposes, are exempt from income tax; and, if so, if he will state the regulations that exist governing such exemptions.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) It is the practice of the Board of Inland Revenue, under the provisions of the Trade Union (Provident Funds) Act of 1893, to allow a registered trade union exemption from income tax in respect of so much of its interest and dividends as is actually applied for the purpose of provident benefits (as defined in the Act), whether specifically earmarked to such benefits or not. Section 2 of the Act prescribes that the exemption is to be claimed and allowed in the same manner as in the case of income applied to charitable purposes, *i.e.*, in accordance with the provisions of Section 98 of the Income Tax Act of 1842.

Technical Instruction in Tyrone—Use of Disused Gaol at Omagh.

MR. MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will consider the desirability of transferring to the County Council of Tyrone the disused gaol at Omagh for purposes of technical instruction or other useful object, subject, however, to such reservations as the Prisons Board required in a similar case in another county.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Prisons Board, with the consent of the Treasury, would be prepared to hand over this prison to the County Council, subject to the conditions referred to. No application in this respect, however, has yet been made to Government by the Council.

Ireland—Rural Libraries Act.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now state what steps the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction and the Congested Districts Board intend to take in order to encourage the adoption of the Rural Libraries Act by Rural District Councils, in view of the fact that the rates will shortly be struck for the next financial year.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I am unable at present to supplement my reply to the hon. Member's previous Question of Monday last.† The matter is receiving careful consideration.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The War Commission.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government have had under consideration the question whether the proceedings of the Commission of Inquiry into the conduct of the late war should be held in secret or should be open to the public; and whether, in view of the dissatisfaction at the withholding from public knowledge the proceedings of that Commission, he will take any, and, if so, what steps to secure the immediate publicity of the evidence produced before this Commission.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The hon. Member knows that the Royal Commission is not under the control of the Government; but I have referred the Question of the hon. Member to the Secretary of the Commission, and from him I have received the following report—

> "The note as to evidence is not officially prepared by the Commission or reviewed by the witnesses. It is furnished to the Press by the Secretary to the Commission, who is responsible for its contents. The Commission accept full responsibility for the procedure adopted by them, and would be prepared to show cause for it in their Report. They have, however, considered it inadvisable to present the evidence until the whole case is complete, but they recognise the natural anxiety for fuller information and the desirability of completing the inquiry as soon as practicable. They cannot as yet state definite dates, but they are using every endeavour to prevent undue delay."

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Are these proceedings held in secret by the advice of the Government or not?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot go behind the backs of the Commissioners, and I am sure the House would not wish me to do so. The Commission is absolutely responsible for its own proceedings; and if the hon. Member asks me whether the procedure is wise or unwise, I may say that I think it is extremely wise.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: It was at the right hon. Gentleman's suggestion?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is a suggestion which the hon. Member has no right to make.

Surrenders by British Troops.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the special Army Order, issued on the 11th April, 1901, announcing that any officer or soldier who, when in the presence of the enemy, displays a white flag or other token of surrender will be tried by general court martial, was in operation at the close of the war; and, if not, under what circumstances, and at what date, was that Order revoked or modified.

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† See 505.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The Army Order in question was in operation at the close of the war and has not been revoked or modified.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Was every-one brought under it, not merely subordinates, but the general officers?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Was General Lord Methuen tried by Court-Martial?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Army Corps.

*COLONEL WELBY (Taunton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that an Army Corps includes engineers, transport, commissariat, and ammunition trains, medical and veterinary services, and is immobile and unfit for war without them; and whether he will complete the Parliamentary Paper, State of the Six Army Corps Commands, by furnishing particulars of these services in each of the first three Army Corps.

MR. BRODRICK: The reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. The demands of the South African War have not enabled us to withdraw all the departmental corps simultaneously with the fighting units, but after the close of the financial year I shall be in a position to show the *cadres* which it is intended to maintain in time of peace for the first three Army Corps.

*COLONEL WELBY: Will the right hon. Gentleman give a Return showing what actually exists at present in the three Army Corps, not merely the *cadres*.

MR. BRODRICK: No, Sir; I think as the units are not yet withdrawn from South Africa the Return would be of no value to the House.

*COLONEL WELBY: But the Return might show what troops are really in the country.

MR. BRODRICK: With considerable labour a Return could be prepared to show in detail all the departmental units scattered over the country.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): Would it not be worth while for the Department in the public interest to undertake this labour?

MR. BRODRICK: I think that, perhaps, hon. Gentlemen exaggerate the importance of the question. Obviously, the units of the departmental corps in South Africa cannot be in this country at the same time, and as they are in process of withdrawal it would give a false impression of the strength of the country if it were assumed that only those units at present in England are to be compared with those to be withdrawn in a few weeks

*COLONEL WELBY: Will the right hon. Gentleman cease to use the name of Army Corps until they are really formed?

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL also rose to put a further Question.

*MR. SPEAKER: This is becoming a debate. The hon. Member should defer further discussion until the Army Estimates come on.

Militia Uniform and Equipment.

MR. LLEWELLYN (Somersetshire, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is his intention to issue any further orders with respect to alterations in the dress or equipment of Militia officers; and, if so, whether, considering the near approach of the preliminary drill season, he will issue such orders with the least possible delay.

MR. BRODRICK: No, Sir. There is no present intention of making any such alterations.

South Africa—Taxation on Natives.

* Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether the taxation on natives instituted by the Native Tax Ordinance, published in the Transvaal Government Gazette of 12th September last, is actually being levied; and whether, seeing that the taxation by the South African Republic which it replaced was not collected in the northern and north-eastern districts of the Transvaal outside the settled country, and that the new taxation exceeds the equivalent taxation levied on natives in the Cape and in Natal, he will consider the advisability of making some relaxation to districts in which native taxation was not previously levied.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E., for Mr. J. Chamberlain): I have no information as to the extent to which this taxation is being actually levied. The fact that the Government of the South African Republic was unable to collect its taxes in certain districts does not appear to be a reason for relaxing in those districts the taxation which the present Local Government considers equitable.

Conveyance of Ministers in War Ships.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what precedent, if any, is there, before the year 1900, for the utilisation of a ship of the Royal Navy by a Minister of the Crown unconnected with the Admiralty, for a voyage for health or pleasure; whether there is any instance, and, if so, what instance, before 1900, of the employment of a ship of the Royal Navy to convey a Minister of the Crown unconnected with the Admiralty on a voyage, except in the cases of Ministers of the Crown who were going on Missions to Foreign Powers in the capacity of Ambassadors, Envoys, or Plenipotentiaries.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): I do not know whether or to what extent Ministers have been conveyed on ships of the Royal Navy on voyages undertaken solely for the purpose of health or pleasure. It is quite possible that Ministers have been so conveyed on the invitation of the captain, and there is nothing in the King's Regulations to prevent such a proceeding. Ships of the Royal Navy have been used prior to 1900 for the conveyance of Ministers of the Crown unconnected with the Admiralty, and I may mention the case of the Duke of Buckingham, who visited Heligoland in 1867, and of Colonel Stanley when visiting Cyprus and Egypt in 1878. There are doubtless other precedents, but as I have said on a previous occasion, the practice, as far as the Admiralty is concerned, is regulated not by precedent, but by the circumstances of each case. The Ministers above referred to were not going on missions to foreign countries or acting in any of the capacities referred to in the hon. Member's Question.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Was it on the invitation of the captain of the "Canopus" that the Secretary for War travelled by that vessel? I shall call attention to this perversion of the ships of the Navy on the Estimates.

Naval Officers and Ship Services.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether any record is kept of payments made by Naval officers out of their own money for ship services, and whether such payments are reported to the Admiralty; whether the practice is limited to officers of particular ranks or branches, or is permitted generally; and whether, in any case of such expenditure, the consent of a superior officer is necessary.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No record such as that which is suggested is kept, nor are the payments reported to the Admiralty. There is no limitation with respect to the ranks of particular officers, nor is the consent of a superior officer necessary. The general policy of the Admiralty with regard to such expenditure was stated by me in reply to the hon. Member on Monday, the 23rd inst. †

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† See page 491.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Will the Admiralty reconsider this extraordinary practice with a view to its abolition?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: At present it is impossible and undesirable to make any actual prohibition.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I beg to give notice that I will call attention to the subject on the Estimates.

Forced Labour in India.

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the Madras Planters' Labour Bill, now before the Madras Legislative Council, providing that in the case of breach of contract a labourer may be imprisoned, and that afterwards the magistrate shall hand him over to the planter with an order to complete his contract; whether he is aware that two Indian members of the Council protested against this provision as being legalised slavery, but that these two members were not appointed upon the Select Committee to which this Bill was referred; whether he will explain by what process the planter will give effect to the magistrate's order for the completion of the contract; and whether he will take immediate steps to stop such legislation.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I am aware of the Bill referred to in the Question, and have perused the remarks upon it of the two Indian members cited by the hon. Member. I think that there is much exaggeration in the language used by them, and I do not admit that the provision referred to, which is found in labour legislation not only elsewhere in India, but in Great Britain itself, and in many other British colonies and dependencies, bears any resemblance to slavery. I understand that if the planter applies for the labourer to be made over to him instead of serving out his sentence, and the magistrate agrees to this being done, the labourer will become again subject to the obligation to perform his contract as he was before, and the contract may be enforced by the means provided in the Bill. I see no reason for taking steps to stop the legislation at this stage. The Bill has been referred to a Select Committee which includes a native of India; and if it passes the Council it will come before me for consideration in ordinary course.

MR. SCHWANN: May I ask the noble Lord whether his attention has been drawn to the case reported in the last Indian mail, of the case of Lalsa, who absconded from a tea-garden in Cachar, and was brought back by guards employed on the estate, was mercilessly beaten by the assistant-manager with a stirrup leather until his head fell on one side, and in a few minutes he was dead.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I gather the hon. Member is reading an extract from a newspaper.

MR. SCHWANN: No, Sir; I am giving facts which have reached me and which, I think, show what the end will be if this Bill is passed.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: If the hon. Member will give me the facts I shall be happy to look into them.

Consular Jurisdiction in Shanghai.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will state to the House the *modus vivendi* agreed upon between the Powers in regard to the question of consular jurisdiction in Shanghai.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): If the right hon. Gentleman will move for a Return I shall be happy to give it. He will, however, no doubt bear in mind that the *modus vivendi* is only a provisional arrangement.

Provision for the Unemployed in Holland.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the attention of the Government has been called to the working of establishments in Holland, where the unemployed obtain work on the land without interfering with the ordinary demand for labour; if any reports on the subject have been furnished them; and, if not, if representations will be made to the Foreign Office so that a report on the subject will be supplied to Members of Parliament.

LORD CRANBORNE: His Majesty's Government have obtained reports from time to time as to the working of the labour colonies in Holland. The latest report will be found on pages 308–319 of the Report on Agencies and Methods for dealing with the Unemployed, laid before Parliament by the Board of Trade Labour Department in 1893 (C. 7182).

Aliens in British Prisons.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can inform the House how many alien convicts and prisoners were on 1st January, 1903 undergoing sentences of criminal punishment in the Criminal Lunatic Asylum at Broadmoor, and in the convict prisons and local prisons of England and Wales.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I am unable to give the figures in the form for which my hon. and gallant friend asks; but I am about to obtain a Return of aliens in prison on a given date in the near future, in order to lay it before the Royal Commission. The result of the inquiry shall be communicated to my hon. friend if he wishes.

Stray Dogs in the Metropolis.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state the number of dogs removed from the streets of the Metropolis last year by the police, and the number restored to their owners through police agency; and will he state the amount realised through the sale of lost, stolen, or strayed dogs which have been sold during the year under an order of the Commissioner of Metropolitan Police.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: The total number of dogs removed from the streets of the Metropolis by the police in the year 1902, under the various provisions in force in the matter, was 26,503. Of these 4,150 were restored to their owners, and the rest, with the exception of 492, which escaped or died, were sent to the Dogs' Home. Nothing was realised for the Police Fund by the sale of lost or strayed dogs. The only cases in which dogs were actually sold by the police—namely, those of seven dogs supposed to be stolen—resulted in a loss, the proceeds not being sufficient to cover the cost of keeping the dogs while required in connection with the charge of theft.

Aliens in Home Counties Workhouses and Asylums.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can inform the House how many aliens were on 1st January, 1903, being maintained in the lunatic asylums and workhouses of the counties of London, Middlesex, Surrey, Berks, Hants, Bucks, and Herts.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): I have no information showing how many aliens were inmates of workhouses on the 1st of January last. As regards lunatic asylums, the matter is one for the Lunacy Commissioners, but I have made inquiry and understand that they have no statistics on the subject.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: May I ask if the "places of origin" of inmates of workhouses are not ascertained by the workhouse authorities in order that the proper ratepayers may be charged with their cost of maintenance?

MR. WALTER LONG: Not in the case of aliens.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Then these destitute persons from all countries can come in and be chargeable to the rates.

MR. WALTER LONG: Yes, and they do.

Lancashire Magistracy.

MR. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster whether he is aware that in the Ashton-under-Lyne petty sessional division no permanent resident magistrate has been appointed for nine years, and that the Urban District Council of Droylsden, with a population of between 11,000 and 12,000 inhabitants, has no permanent resident magistrate, and that it is five years since the last one died; whether he is aware that several urban councils have made representation, by resolution and otherwise, to the Lord Lieutenant of the county, pointing out the inconvenience occasioned by the scarcity of magistrates, without avail; and whether he will take steps to remedy this state of affairs.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER (Sir WILLIAM WALROND, Devonshire, Tiverton): I am not aware whether during the last nine years any county magistrate has been appointed who permanently resides in the Ashton-under-Lyne petty sessional division, nor am I aware whether there is any magistrate permanently residing within the Urban District Council of Droylsden, but on both these points I have caused inquiry to be made. I am aware that representations have been made to the Lord Lieutenant pointing out the inconvenience caused by the scarcity of magistrates in certain districts of Lancashire. I have already communicated with the Lord Lieutenant on the subject, and within the last few months several additions to the County Bench have been made, and I understand that the names of more gentlemen are about to be submitted to me for appointment. I will, however, make further representation to the Lord Lieutenant, and with special reference to the petty sessional division mentioned by the hon. Member.

Terrington Elementary Schools.

MR. GEORGE WHITE (Norfolk, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to the case of Terrington, North West Norfolk, where the managers of the elementary school have definitely given notice to close the school on the 25th March next; and will he state what action (if any) he proposes to take to prevent the children being without instruction between that date and the 30th September, which is the day suggested by the Norfolk County Council for taking over the schools.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): The Board of Education have received information that the managers of the three schools at Terrington, St. Clements, are unable for financial reasons to carry on the schools after 31st March next. The Board, however, are in communication with the managers with a view to inducing them, if possible, to continue the schools until the local authority is in a position to take them over.

Island of Lewis—Cromore-Gravir Road.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Congested Districts Board have now received a revised estimate of the cost of construction of the Cromore-Gravir Road, Island of Lewis; and will he state whether the Board are now prepared to provide a grant such as will enable the local authorities to proceed with the construction of the road.

*THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SCOTT-DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): No estimate of the cost of construction of this road has been received which would justify the Board in promising a grant.

Port Ness Harbour.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether Mr. William Shield, who was deputed to report on the condition of the harbour at Port Ness, Island of Ness, has yet made a report; and, if so, will he state what steps are proposed to clear the harbour of sand, and render it of service to persons engaged in the fishing industry.

*MR. SCOTT-DICKSON: Yes, Sir; a report from Mr. Shield has been received and has been under consideration. The Secretary for Scotland thought it necessary to ask for further information on some of the points dealt with in the report, and when this has been received the report will be made public.

Highland School Boards—Form of Medical Certificates.

*MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland is aware that some school boards in the Highland crofting counties insist on prescribing the precise form in which a medical officer shall make out his certificate, notwithstanding the fact that no such powers are conferred on school boards by Act of Parliament; and seeing that two crofters in the Western Highlands were recently prosecuted and fined for not sending their children to school, the medical certificates with which they had provided themselves not being accepted by the Chairman of the School Board on the ground that the medical officer did not subscribe the words "on soul and conscience" after his signature, will he consider the expediency of issuing a circular to school managers on the subject.

*MR. SCOTT-DICKSON: The hon. Member has already been in communication with the Department on this subject. The rejection of the certificate was by the sheriff, and the hon. Member has been informed that it does not fall within the province of the Department to review the decision of a court of law. The suggestion contained in the latter part of the hon. Member's question as to the reason for the said rejection is not, according to information given to the Department, accurate. It is not proposed to issue any circular on the subject.

MR. WEIR: Is it usual for medical officers to subscribe the words "on soul and conscience" after their signature?

*MR. SCOTT-DICKSON: Yes, it is usual to do so when the certificate is required for production in a court of law.

Roxboro Road School, Limerick.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what amount of money has now accumulated in the hands of the Commissioners of Education of rents received out of the Roxboro Road School, Limerick; and will he explain why that money is allowed to remain in a bank, instead of being applied to some educational purpose; and whether, seeing that in all the schemes proposed for dealing with this endowment by the Educational Endowments Commission it was provided that the value of it should go for educational purposes to the city of Limerick, he will now take steps to have these school premises on Roxboro Road, which were built out of the rates of the city and county of Limerick, transferred to the representatives of the ratepayers for technical education.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The schools have been let to Dean Gregg at a rent of £20 a year which, with the dividends on the funded portion of the endowment, is being accumulated in the hands of the Commissioners. These accumulations amount at the present date to £212 cash and £63 stock. The Commissioners are prepared to consider any proposal that may be made to them for the allocation of these funds to the purposes of technical instruction. In respect to the second part of the question, the position of these schools has on several occasions been discussed in this House. I can only repeat that there is no power to deal with the premises in the manner suggested.

Irish Lunatic Asylum Expenditure.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the increase in lunatic asylum charges in Ireland in recent years, he will consider the expediency of appointing a Select Committee to inquire into the cause or causes of the growth of local expenditure on lunatic asylums in that country, and to consider whether any means can be found of limiting or reducing the burden on Irish ratepayers which is involved.

MR. WYNDHAM: The statistics of insanity do, most unfortunately, show an increase in the numbers of the registered insane. This increase is not confined to Ireland. There has necessarily been a corresponding expansion in the contributions from local rates and from Parliamentary Grants, for the provision of accommodation for the insane, and for their maintenance. The proposal in the Question has already been dealt with in the reports of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation, and I see no reason for further investigation.

Belfast and Limerick Training Colleges.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the amount paid to the Board of Works annually by each of the training colleges of Belfast and Limerick on account of their building loans; what proportion does this annual payment bear to the total income of each college; and whether, in the interest of education in these most important institutions, it is proposed to relieve them of this burden and give them free homes on the same terms as they have been given to the denominational colleges in Dublin.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The income of the Belfast Training College for the year ended 31st August last was £3,583, and of the College at Limerick, £2,188. The annual payments on foot of their building loans are £853 and £803 respectively. It has already been more than once explained that there is no power under existing Treasury rules to make free grants in respect of these colleges. The cases of the colleges in Dublin were exceptional, and the object of the decision arrived at in 1890 was to place the denominational and undenominational colleges in that city on an equality.

MR. BOLAND: Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that the sum of £3,000 annually would settle the whole question, and put these denominational and undenominational training colleges on an equal basis? Will the right hon. Gentleman make such a grant?

*MR. WYNDHAM: I can give no pledge on the matter.

Irish Police at Thurles.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the action of Constable Heaphy at Thurles on the 14th of January last, who, without orders from the officer in charge, left his place in the police cordon and endeavoured to smash a drum which was stationary a few yards in front of him; and will he state what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

*MR. WYNDHAM: I have caused inquiry to be made into this matter, and am assured that the constable named did not act in the manner alleged.

Roscrea Disturbances.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that two out of three men, named respectively John Mitchel, Thomas Larkin, and Patrick Fitzpatrick, who were sentenced to two months imprisonment each, with hard labour, for riot at Roscrea, have been released from Clonmel Prison after twenty-two days imprisonment, and that the third man, Patrick Fitzpatrick, is still detained in prison; and will he explain the reason for this man's detention, the sentence of the court being exactly similar in each of the three cases.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member has, I think, been misinformed. The case of each prisoner was considered on its merits. I may add that I took the preliminary steps towards the discharge of the prisoner named and some others the day before yesterday.

Irish Industrial Schools.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that an undertaking was given by his predecessor in November, 1898, that on application of their relatives or friends children committed to industrial schools should be released; and will he say whether he has acted, or is prepared to act, in accordance with this undertaking, and will he explain why this has not been done in a case to which his attention has been called of a child committed under a false description both as to age and religion.

*MR. WYNDHAM: My hon, friend has not been correctly informed. No undertaking such as alleged was given by my predecessor. The case referred to at the end of the Question is presumably that of Elizabeth Dunbar. She was not committed under a false description as to age and religion. The entries in the committal order correspond in both of these respects with the facts as disclosed by the certificate of baptism.

Imprisonment for Contempt of Court in Ireland.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will consider the advisability of introducing a Bill dealing with the power of judges to give prolonged imprisonment in cases of contempt of court.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Government has already stated that there is no necessity for legislation in this matter, the Rules which govern questions of contempt being well understood.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Has the attention of the right hon. Gentleman been directed to abuses of this power?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: And will the right hon. Gentleman speak to the Irish judges about it?

No answer was returned.

Irish Postal Service—Allowances to Inspecting Telegraphists.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he is aware that assistant surveyors in the Irish postal service are paid 15s. a day subsistence allowance, and first-class railway expenses, whilst inspecting telegraphists are paid only 10s. a day subsistence allowance and second-class railway fare; and whether, seeing that both classes of officers have similar expenses, he will consider the advisability of equalising the allowances granted to them.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I am aware of the difference referred to. Inspecting telegraphists are of a lower official rank than assistant surveyors, and their subsistence allowances follow their rank. The allowances in Ireland are the same as those in the rest of the United Kingdom, and I see no reason to alter them.

Irish Lights.

MR. MOONEY (Dublin Co., S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has yet received from the Commissioners of Irish Lights any explanation as to the position of certain lights on the Irish coast referred to by Lieutenant Webster, R.N.R., in his letter of 25th August, 1902; and, if so, will he say what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE, Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The Commissioner of Irish Lights informed me last December that after a careful comparison they had found that the geographical positions of these lights were in practical agreement with their positions as marked in the Admiralty Charts. In these circumstances, no further action has been taken.

London Education Bill.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.); I beg to ask the first Lord of the Treasury whether he is yet in a position to say when the Government propose to proceed with the Education Bill for London.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not in a position to make a statement as to the day on which the Bill will be introduced.

DR. MACNAMARA: Will it be proceeded with before Easter?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should certainly hope to be able to introduce it before Easter.

London and Globe Finance Corporation.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of Mr. Attorney General's decision not to direct a prosecution in respect of the alleged fraud connected with the London and Globe Finance Corporation, he will agree to a Motion for a Select Committee to inquire into the circumstances.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member must be aware that that is a request which cannot possibly be acceded to.

Ministers as Company Directors.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the names of the Members of the Government who are directors of public companies, together with the names of the companies.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member, I believe, has access to this information. [Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: No.] I should like to know, then, where he got the ample materials which he produced in his speech? I cannot accede to the suggestion on the Paper.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: As a personal explanation I may say that I ask the right hon. Gentleman for this information because he impugned the facts which I gave in my speech.

National Expenditure Committee.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will take steps to reappoint the Committee on National Expenditure appointed last session, in order that the Committee may present a report before the Chancellor of the Exchequer makes his Budget statement.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall certainly take steps to reappoint the Committee in which my hon. friend is so much interested, but whether it will be able to finish its labours before the Budget is a question which, of course, depends on the Committee.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): Can the First Lord of the Treasury say what will be the course of business after the debate on the Address is concluded?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I trust that the business connected with the Address will finish to-day. To-morrow is a private Members' afternoon. Next week I propose to take the Supplementary Estimates. We shall begin them on Monday and continue them.

NEW BILLS.

MERCHANDISE MARKS BILLS.

"To amend the Sixteenth Section of the Merchandise Marks Act, 1887, and to restrain the False Marking of Foreign Goods as British made," presented by Sir Howard Vincent; supported by Major Rasch, Colonel Brookfield, Sir Henry Seton-Karr, and Mr. Field; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 63.]

PUBLIC TRUSTEE BILL.

"For the appointment of a Public Trustee and Executor," presented by Sir Howard Vincent; supported by Mr. H. D. Greene, Mr. Howard, and Colonel Tufnell; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 64.]

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR ADDRESS).

IMMIGRATION OF DESTITUTE ALIENS.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [17th February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament." —(*Mr. Gretton.*)

Question again proposed.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): During the seventeen years I have occupied a seat in this House, I have frequently called attention to the subject matter of this Amendment, the immigration of destitute aliens into our large cities, and especially into the East End of London. Perhaps I may tell the House why I have taken so much interest in this matter. For some years before I became a Member I occupied the post of Director of Criminal Investigation to the Metropolitan Police, and I had a good deal to do with the criminal population of London. I saw the enormous and increasing harm which was being done by criminal aliens, and directed my attention very urgently to the question. I desire to present my case this afternoon in the calmest possible manner, and without unduly encroaching on the patience of the House. In the first place, I should like to say most emphatically that this motion has nothing whatever to do with any religious question. For Jews, as Jews, I have the greatest possible respect; for ability, intelligence, activity and perseverance, I believe them to be absolutely unequalled. I therefore hope that my hon. friends who are members of the Hebrew faith will accept my most positive assurance that I move in this matter without the slightest feeling as regards the Jewish persuasion. There is another point, and that is that I have no feeling whatever against foreigners. I look upon this subject entirely as one of British interest. The sole question is: Is this immigration doing harm to the British working man; is it ousting him in particular districts and trades from his employment? If hon. Members will be so kind as to look at the terms of the Amendment on the Paper they will see that I refer first of all to the great increase of late in the immigration of destitute aliens, coupled with the considerable numbers of such who become a charge on the criminal law of this country. I have provided myself with the latest Returns that are available, and that have been presented by the Board of Trade to this House.

The Alien Return for December last gave figures for the whole of the twelve months ending 31st December, 1902, and under the heading of "Aliens not stated to be *en route* to America or other places out of the United Kingdom," there appears a total of 81,402, as compared with 70,610 in the year before. I am quite aware that a considerable number of the aliens included in this Return—which I may say by the way is by no means an accurate Return, because it is one taken very much at haphazard, and although it contains the very best information we can get, I am sure the President of the Board of Trade will not pretend that it is a really accurate statement of alien immigration, neither will he deny that it is very much larger than is apparent—I say I am quite aware that a considerable number of these aliens are sailors. The total of these for the two years remained, however, substantially the same, viz., 15,039 in 1901 and 15,146 in 1902, and though we may deduct these, I contend that the importation of foreign sailors is a grievous injury to the British mercantile industry and to British sailors. The decline in the number of British sailors in the mercantile marine is a serious factor in our industrial life at present. But even deducting the whole of the foreign sailors, we have an increase during the twelve months of over 10,000 aliens in this country. I gather from the Board of Trade Returns that that increase is continuing in the present year, for I find that in January the aliens described as "not *en route*," number 5,443 as against 4,132, an increase of 1,300. These figures fully justify me, then, in calling the attention of this House to undoubted facts of great interest. The great majority of these aliens go to the East End of London, some go to Hull, Grimsby, Leeds, and places on the East coast; but the great majority, 60 per cent. or 70 per cent., undoubtedly find their way into the East End of London. My second point is that a considerable number of these aliens become a charge on the criminal law of this country. I do not say that the great majority of the aliens who come in are dishonest or criminal, or otherwise than civil and industrious individuals, but my contention is that they are ousting our own countrymen from trades in which they are entitled to a considerable proportion of the employment.

Still, among the aliens coming in there is an increasing number who most undoubtedly, from the point of view of the criminal law, are very undesirable persons. Hon. Members can hardly have failed to have noticed frequent statements by Judges of the High Courts sitting at the Central Criminal Court, by the Recorder of London, by the Judge at the London Sessions, and by Metropolitan Police Magistrates in reference to this matter.

I have here a statement made by Mr. M'Connell, Chairman of the London Sessions, to the effect that of 103 persons charged no fewer than 25 per cent. were of foreign nationality. The evidence given by Mr. M'Connell only this morning before the Commission on Alien Immigration was of a very remarkable character indeed. A report of it will, no doubt, appear in the papers, and I would commend it to the consideration of hon. Members. I gather, roughly, that Mr. M'Connell stated that in 1892 there were 1,627 prisoners at the North London Sessions, and of these 116 were aliens, giving a proportion of about 7 per cent. In 1900 there were 1,722 prisoners, of whom 195 were aliens, or about 11 per cent. Last year the total number was 1,896, among whom there were 249 aliens, or a proportion of 13 per cent. It was further stated by Mr. M'Connell that at the February Sessions this year the aliens formed one-fourth of the total number of prisoners in the calendar. I think, therefore, the House will acquit me of all exaggeration as to the great increase in the number of these aliens amenable to the criminal law. The statement of Mr. M'Connell this morning was, it will be admitted, of a very serious and important character. I understood him to say that many of the prisoners who come for the first time for trial at the North London Sessions give very strong foreign names, there being thus no doubt as to their place of origin. They also require the services of an interpreter. But when they reappear at some subsequent sessions they claim to be the possessors of strong English names—"Smith," for instance. They no longer require the services of an interpreter, and appear to thoroughly understand all evidence given in the English language. That is a very serious condition of things. At the Sessions which had just been held there was one prisoner especially who had been in this country considerably under a month. Some of the offences charged against these aliens are, I admit, of a very trivial kind, but others are of a very grave and serious character indeed. The House is aware that one of the most common offences, inflicting loss on the people of London, is the crime of burglary. Now, a considerable number of these prisoners arrested by the Metropolitan Police are burglars provided with tools of a most elaborate character, and considerable association has been traced between the several gangs that have fallen into the hands of the police.

My right hon. friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department gave me, in November last, a very remarkable statement indeed. It was to the effect that in the twelve months ending October, 1902, 4,930 aliens—or nearly 5,000—had been arrested by the Metropolitan police. I need hardly point out to the House how very serious a charge this puts upon the ratepayers of London. The police are a very costly part of the taxation of London. But we have no hesitation in paying for them, because they render us very great services indeed. I do submit to the House, however, that it is unfair to the ratepayers that they should be called upon to maintain a large police force in order to restrain alien immigrants from committing offences against the law. It should also be borne in mind that while these alien offenders are serving their sentences in prison they involve a pretty considerable expenditure, for the lowest cost of a prisoner is 8s. per week. As I was told by the President of the Local Government Board in answer to a Question I put this afternoon, destitute persons of all countries can actually come over here and quarter themselves, in the workhouses and asylums, upon the ratepayers of this country, whereas, if a destitute person comes from Sheffield, or any other place, and goes into the Union of St. George's, Hanover Square, the Guardians of that Union can immediately make a claim on the authorities of the place of origin of that pauper, so that the London ratepayers, at any rate, do not have to bear the burden. There is no such remedy, however, in the case of foreigners who go into our workhouses.

I do not desire to elaborate this matter to any great extent, but I may point out that some important figures with regard to the increase of criminals amongst the aliens have been recently published by a journal which has, with great public spirit, devoted considerable attention to this subject. I refer to the *Daily Express*, which, on the 7th February last, published figures for the year 1902, showing the number of aliens charged at every North London Session, the total for the year being 280. It has been pointed out, too, that a new kind of offence is coming much into vogue—viz., larcenies by German and other foreign waiters. They go into an hotel and obtain from the waiting room a sheet of note paper with the hotel heading, on which they get somebody to write in fluent English a character; by this means they secure a situation, and take advantage of the opportunity to rob their employer.

Another serious matter is the expulsion by foreign countries of their worst characters, who drift to England. I am not speaking from imagination. During the years I served with the Metropolitan Police I had opportunities of making myself acquainted with the facts, while recently I have had the privilege of being a British representative at the Anti-Anarchist Conference at Rome, called by the Italian Government, at which the chief officers of police of every European nation were present. This deportation of criminals from one country to another without the slightest notice was a matter of general complaint. All agreed that persons in France, Germany, Russia, Italy, or Spain, against whom there was strong suspicion, although they might not have been convicted of any offence, were, on the warrant of the Minister of the Interior, deported, and in the natural course of things, drifted to England, because England was the only country to which they could go without inquiry as to their physical health or antecedents. That being so, the public of this country have a very fair ground of complaint against unrestricted immigration of this kind.

As to the effect of this immigration, in the year 1888, on the motion of the hon. Member for Great Yarmouth, a Select Committee, of which I was a member, was appointed to inquire into the question. That Committee sat through the session of 1888 and into the session of 1889, so that it went very elaborately into the whole matter. The conclusions at which the Committee arrived were—that the better class of immigrants only arrive in transit to other countries, but the poorest and worst class remain here, moving on when they have made a little money, and giving place to other poor aliens; secondly, that in the trades they chiefly affect—tailoring, shoemaking, and cabinetmaking, they work for less wages than British workmen and for longer hours; and are dirty and uncleanly in their habits. Under these circumstances the Committee recommended the enforcement of the Alien Act of William IV., which had fallen into disuse, but which required the master of a ship to report to the Customs the names of the aliens on board his vessel, the British Consul being then instructed to exercise vigilance in the matter. That suggestion was adopted by the Government of the day, and since then we have had these "alien returns," but, as the master of the ship complies with the requirement in a somewhat rough and ready way, too much reliance must not be placed upon them. The Committee declared—

> "There is general agreement that pauper immigration is an evil and should be checked, and that so doing would largely decrease, if not altogether destroy, the sweating system. The only way effectually to accomplish this is to stop them at the port of arrival. While your Committee see great difficulties in the way of enforcing laws similar to those in the United States and other countries against the importation of pauper and destitute aliens, and while they are not prepared to recommend legislation at present, they contemplate the possibility of such legislation becoming necessary in the future, in view of the crowded condition of our great towns, the extreme pressure which exists amongst the poorer parts of the population, and the tendency of destitute foreigners to reduce still lower the social and material condition of our poor."

In 1903 I think we are justified in asking the Government of the country whether the time contemplated by the Select Committee has not arrived. On what do I base my contention that the time has arrived for very active steps to be taken? First, the information furnished by the Alien Returns and the police reports as to the increasing extent of immigration; secondly, on the measures adopted in Eastern Europe to bring about the exodus of from 70,000 to 100,000 of the poorer population every year; thirdly, the refusal of any number of European countries, the United States, and the self-governing colonies, to accept these people save under the strictest regulations, vigorously applied, and the consequent necessity for the poorest, weakest, and most undesirable of the immigrants to seek shelter within the United Kingdom; fourthly, the enormous increase in our own urban population, the overcrowding and the high rents of workmen's dwellings, with an augmented difficulty of finding employment and the danger of an epidemic disease being brought to our crowded centres by these immigrants; and, lastly, the change which has come over public opinion upon this question, and the urgent demand of the people as a whole, and especially in East London, for some measures to be taken.

I come now to the real effect of this immigration. It is seriously affecting the employment, welfare, and housing of the working classes. The employment question is of a most serious character. My hon. friend the Member for South Islington is to preside over a conference at the Guildhall to-morrow on the question of the unemployed. Why is such a conference thought necessary? They will doubtless seek some pallative measures. Why do they not go to the root of the evil? Last night the President of the Board of Agriculture refused to allow Canadian store cattle to come to this country for fear they should introduce disease. Why is not this question looked at in the same light? Would it not be better to look the facts in the face and see what it is that causes the lack of employment, instead of seeking palliative measures? I hope my hon. friend in his presidential remarks to-morrow will address himself to this question. I am sorry not to see present more Members who claim especially to represent the labour interest, because this is essentially a labour question. I understand the Home Secretary received this morning a deputation which pressed for a reduction of the naturalisation fees. If anything, the fees should be larger, not smaller. We are far too ready to accord the privileges of British citizenship without inquiry, provided an individual gets a lawyer or some one else to write out an application and sends the moderate fee of £2 or £3. The authorities ought to be extremely careful with regard to whom and on what grounds they accord these privileges. It is quite unnecessary for me to say more to show the effects this alien immigration has upon the employment of the people, because we have evidence of the surest possible character that in certain localities the large number of aliens presses very hardly upon certain trades.

As to the welfare of the people, and the question of the housing of the people, a very remarkable statement was made the other day by my hon. friend who will second this Motion, with regard to the ousting of the population from certain localities in the East End of London by these foreign immigrants. I have no doubt my hon. friend will tell the House the facts upon this very important question. That will, of course, obviate the necessity of my going into detail. The Birkbeck Institution trustees made a very elaborate inquiry into this question, and although I have the report in my hand I do not think it is necessary to read in detail the result of the inquiries made by the two Commissioners who were appointed. They report, however, that this foreign immigration had a very serious effect upon the housing question in the East End of London. What is the use of Motions of this kind, and Questions being addressed to the President of the Local Government Board, and of Bills being introduced in this House for the welfare of the people, if our own people are to continue to be displaced by destitute foreign immigrants? My hon. friend mentioned that even model dwelling houses erected by the London County Council were inhabited by these aliens. There is this remarkable fact about them for which I have a very strong sympathy, and it is that they stick very closely together. They rent houses and recoup themselves by taking an inordinate number of lodgers and crowd a number of people into one small room, in defiance of all the regulations of this House, of the County Council, of the local authorities, and of the Public Health Act; consequently they are a real source of danger to the community. I submit that I have largely made out the case that the immigration of destitute aliens has a very serious effect upon the housing and the welfare of the working classes.

In regard to the large increase in the number of undesirable persons who have become amenable to the criminal law, I claim to have made out my case. Upon this criminal question I would refer hon. Members to what is announced in the evening papers in regard to an anarchist plot to assassinate the rulers of practically all European nations, this has just been unearthed in New York, and has rendered it necessary to take the utmost precautions with regard to the safety of the residents of the United States. It behoves, therefore, every nation as a duty not only to its own country, but to society at large, to take every possible precaution they can against any conspiracy to assassinate persons, whether they be Sovereigns or ordinary members of the community. I hope the President of the Board of Trade will not misunderstand my meaning. I have no desire to press the case against him personally, but he must allow me to say, as a loyal member of his Party, and as one who has taken great interest in this subject, that I do not think the Board of Trade and the Government as a whole, have redeemed their promises upon this question. Every month, almost every week and every day, hon. Members for years past have called the attention of the Government to this question. When the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was President of the Board of Trade, he stated in 1895 that this question of the immigration of destitute aliens was one of great importance and demanded attention. And in the year 1896 it was one of the principal measures in the Queen's Speech. Lord Salisbury, in 1894, introduced a Bill to deal with this question, and now my right hon. friend finds great difficulty in dealing with the subject. I would remind him that Lord Salisbury found no difficulty in 1894. In 1898 a noble friend of mine, Lord Hardwicke, now the Under Secretary of State for War, introduced a Bill in the House of Lords and it went through all its stages, and yet the present Government do nothing whatever. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the 10th of February, 1897, said that he was alive to the promises he had made, and the words he then used were of a most important character. A Motion was made by an hon. friend of mine who then sat in this House—I refer to the hon. Member for Haggerston, Mr. Lowels. It was stated that not only individual Members, but the whole Government, were pledged on this subject, and did not desire to depart from the pledges given. One Minister stated that the Government adhered to every pledge they had given and declared that at no distant time they would bring forward legislation on the subject. That was a Minister giving expression to the opinion and feeling of the Government as a whole. After a statement so categorically clear and plain Mr. Lowels withdrew his Motion and left it in the hands of His Majesty's Government. And yet the Sessions of 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901 and 1902 go by, and we hear nothing more of this matter, which not only individual Members but the Government as a whole have pledged themselves to deal with. Last year a Motion was made by the hon. and gallant Member for Stepney. It was shown that the whole matter had been enquired into in 1888 and 1889 when two or three volumes of evidence of the most drastic character were produced. We all know that the Government has very easy ways of getting out of anything, and there are two ways to do it. You can appoint either a Select Committee or a Royal Commission. The Royal Commission is the better of the two, because then the Minister concerned can say: "I have no authority upon this question, for the Commission are absolutely free; I should not dare to ask them when they are going to meet, or when they will report, for that would be interfering with their function." That is exactly what took place. A Royal Commission was appointed, with Lord James of Hereford as Chairman. I make no charge whatever against Lord James, but I am sorry to observe that after the Royal Commission had met several times in the course of last summer it never met at all from July to December, so that for six months in the year nothing was done. An urgent question of this character is not to be trifled with in this way. It must be understood that I make no charge in the slightest degree against Lord James himself. I only regret that the imperfect state of his health did not enable him to proceed with the inquiry, but of course it was the duty of the President of the Board of Trade to ask if his health precluded him from holding meetings on such an important subject. My right hon. friend gives the reply which I expected, namely, that he has no authority over the Commission and that he really does not know anything about them. Happily, repeated Questions produced a meeting on the 8th of December, and the Commission is sitting at the present time.

The complaint I make against my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade, and against the Government of which I am a loyal supporter, is that the pledges they have given, and the numerous promises to the electors made by individual members of the Government—as for instance in the election addresses of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the President of the Board of Trade and a large number of other Members—have not been fulfilled. I have all their names and the names of their constituencies here. I expected something better than that a Royal Commission should be set to hush up the whole thing again. I cannot understand why my right hon. friend the Member for West Monmouthshire is not here to-day. We know by the daily papers, and by *The Times* especially, that he takes a great interest in this question of immigration, but unfortunately his interest in it is confined to immigration into South Africa, and not into the East End of London or into this country generally. It was well known that this question was coming on first to-day. I hope the right hon. Gentleman is not ill, but if he is well I cannot understand a Statesman who takes such an interest in the question not being here. On the 5th February he wrote a letter to *The Times* with regard to the immigration of Chinese into South Africa, in which he says—

> "No wonder Mr. Chamberlain has treated as an insult this presentment of a project for the latest pattern of a British colony. I shall not waste time in discussing such an alternative. I am well assured that no British Government will ever be a party to such a degradation of the British name, it has been made clear that it has been indignantly rejected by every organ of public opinion in this country and by the unanimous voice of our self-governing colonies also, who have had bitter experience of this demoralising mischief."

[AN HON. MEMBER: Question.] It is the question. The immigration of aliens into this country is more a question for the people of this country than the immigration of a few Chinese to work in the mines of South Africa. They would be brought in there and returned to their own country under proper regulations, as the coolies are at the present time. Why all this indignation when he is not even here to give his opinion on the question of alien immigration into London? I am greatly indebted to the House for the patience with which they have listened to me. I hope I have succeeded, as it was my endeavour to do, in putting the question moderately and fairly. I am most anxious that it should not be thought that this has anything to do with any attack upon Jews or foreigners as foreigners, but I occupy a seat as the representative of British electors, and it is in their interest and the interest of the people of this country that I have brought forward the Amendment. I beg leave, therefore, to move it, and to commend it to the earnest consideration of the House and of His Majesty's Government.

*MR. S. FORDE RIDLEY (Bethnal Green, S.W.): My hon. and gallant friend, the Member for Sheffield, who has just sat down, made a most lucid and exhaustive speech on this subject, and I rise, though very willingly indeed, with considerable diffidence, to second the Amendment, with the terms of which I am in hearty accord. I should like to take up the parable of the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for West Monmouthshire, and to say that I raise my voice in this House in order that I may save my fellowmen in this country, if not in South Africa, from that moral degradation to which the right hon. gentleman himself is so rightly opposed. I rise as the representative of British working men in a working class constituency in East London—men who are suffering day by day from this unrestricted alien immigration, which is surely—I was going to say slowly, but it is moving fast—turning them out of house and home, and also out of the work by which they can earn their livelihood. The state of things in East London at present is indeed a most serious one. I had the honour to second an Amendment at the commencement of last session upon the same subject which we are discussing this afternoon. In seconding the Amendment to-day I find my task less difficult. At the same time, I am sorry that I find it easy to second the Amendment after a lapse of one year, because a very great deal has taken place on this momentous subject during the last twelve months. The increase in the immigration from various countries of paupers and undesirable characters who are quite as objectionable, and even more objectionable than the extreme pauper class, is so serious, that I do not see how any Government, whichever side of politics they might represent, could allow the present time to go by without having a full and exhaustive inquiry made into the circumstances. When we hear that during the past twelve months the increase of immigrants was no less than 11,000, when I remind the House that those people find their homes in the congested districts of our great cities, and chiefly in the East End of London, and that the housing accommodation in those parts of London and of other cities, instead of increasing, is rather on the decrease, and liable to decrease still further through the clearing away of overcrowded slum areas, then I think the House of Commons and the Government must seriously consider whether this is not a state of things which cannot continue. It is a state of things which, if allowed to go unrestricted, must end in riot and disorder. I do not like to have to refer to, or even to suggest, anything so terrible as disorder and riot among our own labouring classes. It is sad enough when we hear of disorder and disagreement between employers and employed. But the truth in regard to the present dangerous state of things was brought home to me the other day in the district I represent in East London. It was brought to my knowledge that two foreign Jews had been hunted down the streets by hundreds of British working men. When we have come to that, then I think it is indeed time for the Government to consider what action should be taken in the matter. The President of the Board of Trade has stated that he cannot hasten the labours of the Royal Commission, who have been sitting only half of the time they ought to have been sitting, inquiring into this matter. I would ask whether the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, cannot in some way bring pressure to bear on the members of the Commission in order that we may obtain a speedy report, and see whether we cannot do something to remedy this dangerous state of things.

There is another reason why I second this Amendment to-day, and it is one with which the House is perfectly familiar, namely, the case of the unemployed in London, which has been so prominently brought before us during the last few weeks. We have had processions of unemployed parading the streets of the West End and other parts, seeking to raise money in order that they may alleviate the distress which prevails. I am not of those who believe that these processions are composed entirely of the deserving unemployed, or of desirable characters. I am not one of those who think that it is wise that processions of this kind should be allowed to annoy and disturb peaceable citizens, but being closely connected with those whom I represent in this House, I do know that there is a very large amount of genuine distress felt in East London at the present time. I know that the working classes generally suffer in silence and in patience. They are content to give up their little luxuries, which are not many at the best of times, and they bear their burdens as best they can. They are used to it. It comes year after year, as the winter comes round. They bear the pinch, and they do not make much noise about it. But it is undoubted that this winter there has been an abnormal amount of distress felt in some districts of London, and especially in the East End. This distress has been rendered far more acute by the enormous influx of these destitute aliens who become the prey of the sweater directly they arrive in this country. They are willing to work for any wage. I heard of a case the other day of a number of these people being employed in overcrowded rooms at a most insanitary business; these poor foreigners were paid at the rate of a halfpenny per hour for their work. I mention that only to show to what depths these people may sink in order to keep body and soul together. They do not know the English language, and they are willing to work for almost anything, because they have themselves and their families to support. They therefore fall, an easy prey, into the hands of sweaters, who herd them in sweating dens and work them to the bone day and night.

This is not sentiment I am giving to the House—I know that sentiment is the last thing the House of Commons wants—but it is the stern and solemn truth, in regard to what is going on at the present day. There are builders who pull down slum areas and erect whole new streets; on the top of the buildings there are workshops with intercommunication between one house and another. They will not accept a Christian landlord, though why I cannot for the life of me understand, unless it is in order that they may carry on their trade under some conditions which are certainly not according to the law. These houses are built by whole streets at a time, and as soon as the roof is put upon them, they are entered by foreign paupers who do not even understand the English language. When an inspector is admitted, the people are hustled out at the top round by the back, and you can never arrive at the true state of the overcrowding in these districts. I referred the other day to what I considered to be the key of the housing problem, viz., this unrestricted influx of aliens. My hon. and gallant friend has quoted a remark I then made in regard to certain buildings which had been erected by the London County Council. I said at that time, and I believe it is the case, that it is absolutely useless for us, at enormous cost to the ratepayers and the Metropolis, to erect expensive and elaborate blocks of flats and model dwellings which do not suit the class of people whom we turn out, because they cannot afford to pay the high rents demanded, and then to allow these buildings to be filled with aliens, from whatever country they may come. Our own workmen are consequently driven from the neighbourhood where they are obliged to live by the exigencies of their trade—thus taking the bread out of their mouths.

I had a census taken a year ago of what is known as the Boundary Street area in Shoreditch and Bethnal Green. No doubt that area is familiar to many hon. Members. A most insanitary district was cleared, and the site built upon at an enormous cost. Many hon. Members have, no doubt, read Mr. Morrison's book "The Child of the Jago," which contains a very faithful account of the conditions under which the people in that part of London lived. I knew it well, for I worked in it myself for years. I found from that census that there were no fewer than 259 alien families then comfortably ensconced in these dwellings. Is it not perfectly grotesque that we should be content to sit here and allow these heroic measures to be passed, and put our hands in our pockets for the erection of these buildings which, forsooth, are not to serve the purpose we had in view, but are used to turn out the very class of men, the British workers, whom we are seeking to help. I have no doubt that if I could get another census taken now—and should ask for a return by the London County Council—we should find that there are a greater number of aliens living in these blocks now than a year ago. I want to suggest this consideration to the House: if the rents charged for these dwellings are so high that the British workman cannot afford to pay them, how can the aliens pay them? I do not suggest the answer; I leave it to the common sense of hon. Members to draw their own conclusions. There must be a reason.

MR. STUART SAMUEL (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel): What is it?

*MR. S. F. RIDLEY: The only reason that suggests itself to my mind is that there must be some very serious overcrowding going on, and that if the system of inspection were complete it would prove that the rents could only be earned by some such overcrowding.

MR. STUART SAMUEL: Does that remark apply to Boundary Street?

*MR. S. F. RIDLEY: The remarks I make apply to any buildings for which these excessively high rents are being charged, and where British working men have been ousted to make room for these aliens. I will not detain the House by going into any details of the figures so fully presented by the hon. and gallant Member who moved the Amendment, but I will take a point which the hon. and gallant Gentleman has not referred to; and that is, that if other countries find it necessary to have restrictive legislation on the subject, does it not strike some of us here that there may be something in it? I know perfectly well what is the result of this restriction in America, it reacts upon us. The most healthy immigrants, those who have really a good character and some visible means of subsistence, are admitted into the United States, where there is an elaborate system of examination. But the result is that those who may have no means of subsistence, who are unhealthy and undesirable in many cases, come to this country where no examination whatever is imposed. Therefore, in self-defence, I maintain we would be wise to place some restriction on the influx of these undesirable aliens. Now, this question has forced itself on the attention of the country, during the last twelve months especially, through the medium of the law courts and by reports of the speeches of various judges and magistrates in London, as to the amount of crime committed by foreigners of a most undesirable class, who introduce crimes into this country with which, thank God, we, as a rule, are not conversant. They carry on a nefarious traffic in human lives, not only of working men, but of women and young girls. These facts surely are a disgrace to any country, and it will be a greater disgrace if the responsible Government of this country, does not take steps to apply a remedy to that dreadful state of things. When we know that there are large companies of employers and associations of men, banded together in order to carry on what is called a traffic in women and girls—it is difficult to know by what phrase to describe it—as has been shown by the evidence given before the Royal Commission, hon. Members will see what is the real state of things. When it is brought to our notice that there is such an organised traffic, surely the Government cannot allow this state of things to go on without moving a hand to try and stop it.

I am afraid I have detained the House too long, but I have endeavoured not to cover the ground occupied by my hon. and gallant friend. I ally myself with him in everything he has said in his exhaustive and noteworthy speech. Hon. Members on the other side of the House who take an interest in this subject, and I know that many do, should face it boldly. I know it is a difficult question, but that is no reason why it should not be faced and dealt with both from an economic and a moral point of view, otherwise we cannot do the good we are all seeking to accomplish. This is not a political question, but one on which all hon. Members on either side of the House should ally themselves, go to the root of it, deal with it honestly and fairly, and see whether something cannot be done to remedy a state of things which causes such havoc and destruction to so many of our fellow-subjects.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the great increase of late in the immigration of destitute aliens into the East End of London, coupled with the considerable numbers of such aliens who become a charge on the Criminal Law of this country, constitute a grave national danger, seriously affecting the employment, the welfare, and the housing of the working classes, and calls, therefore, for the immediate fulfilment of the repeated promises of legislation upon the subject on behalf of His Majesty's Government, and notably of that of 10th February, 1897, declaring that not only individual members, but the Government as a whole, were pledged to some legislation on the subject."—(*Sir Howard Vincent.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. GERALD BALFOUR (Leeds, Central): A year ago an Amendment was moved by my hon. friend the Member for Stepney, and seconded by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green, raising the same question raised by the hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield. On that occasion the Amendment was withdrawn on the announcement by the Government that they proposed to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the whole subject. Now, my hon. and gallant friend the Member for Sheffield and the hon. Member who has just sat down have not expressed themselves as satisfied with what the Government proposed to do. The hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield has taken a different view, and has insinuated, if he has not declared, that the Royal Commission was appointed in order to hush up the whole matter. I must express my regret that my hon. and gallant friend should have made a statement of that sort. I can assure the House that the Royal Commission was not appointed to hush up this matter, which we recognise to be a very grave and also a very difficult matter.

My hon. and gallant friend further said that the Royal Commission has trifled with this question, inasmuch as it had sat up till July last, but did not sit during the later months of the year. My hon. and gallant friend knows, of course, that the Commission did not sit during the later months in the year because of the indisposition of the Chairman, Lord James. My hon. and gallant friend suggested that it was my duty as President of the Board of Trade to intimate to Lord James that it was desirable that he should retire from the chairmanship. I believe no man in either House has a keener sense of public duty than Lord James; and I am quite certain that it was perfectly safe to leave a question of that kind to him, because if he considered it his duty to retire he would undoubtedly have retired. If he had considered it his duty to retire, it would have been a great public misfortune, because there is no man more capable of discharging the duties of Chairman than Lord James. As a matter of fact, I do not think it was quite fair for my hon. and gallant friend to suggest that the Commission has trifled with this question. Since it was appointed, the Commission has sat twenty-one times, and has examined eighty witnesses. I understand that the case of the persons represented by the hon. Member for Stepney is still under consideration by the Commission, and that evidence has still to be given in favour of excluding aliens or of imposing some restrictions on alien immigration. When the case for exclusion or restriction has been finished, naturally the case of those who are opposed to that view will have to be heard; and not until both sides have been heard is it possible for the Government or the House of Commons to come to a wise conclusion on this matter. It is under these circumstances that my hon. and gallant friend thinks it right to move an Amendment which practically censures the Government for not having brought in legislation before the Royal Commission had reported. Even if my hon. and gallant friend's contention is correct, which I absolutely deny—and it is wholly inconsistent with the attitude of the hon. Member for Stepney and the hon. Member for Bethnal Green—the Government would have deserved censure, if, having appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into this question, they were to undertake legislation before that Commission had reported.

I do not propose to follow my hon. and gallant friend into the details of his speech, because I do not consider it would be practicable or desirable that the matter should be fully discussed in this House, any more than it would be practicable or desirable for the Government to introduce legislation. I would say, however, that the speech of my hon. and gallant friend shows what a difficult problem we have to face. One of the points my hon. and gallant friend laid stress upon was the crimes that had been committed by aliens. What were the crimes to which my hon. and gallant friend specially referred? He referred to alien burglars, provided with tools of the most elaborate kind. I always understood that a burglar's outfit cost, at the very least, £100, and I should like to ask my hon. and gallant friend how he thinks that any man with that amount of capital would come to this country as a pauper alien.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: I cannot accept my right hon. friend's statement as correct.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Then my hon. and gallant friend refers to larcenies by German waiters. Does he suggest that we can prevent that by any ordinary restriction placed on immigration? The fact is, that although my hon. and gallant friend pointed to what everyone admits is a great evil, he has not suggested what remedy should be applied. He referred to the discussion yesterday on the question of the exclusion of Canadian cattle, and he asked, if the President of the Board of Agriculture would not permit the importation of Canadian cattle, why should not the Government take up a similar attitude with reference to alien immigration? Does he say we should absolutely prohibit immigration? [Sir Howard Vincent: Yes—undesirable immigration.] It is there the difficulty arises. My hon. and gallant friend referred to the Bill introduced by Lord Salisbury in 1894. He said that Lord Salisbury had no difficulty regarding the matter, and asked what difficulty the present Government should have. In spite of what my hon. and gallant friend has said, we do understand this question, and we have a deeper sense of the difficulties connected with it than was possible in 1894. I venture to express the confident opinion that if the Bill introduced by Lord Salisbury in 1894 were passed into law, it would have done almost less than nothing towards diminishing the evil of which my hon. and gallant friend, and my hon. friend the Member for Bethnal Green justly complain. It was in order that we might have further information and further light thrown on this subject that the Royal Commission was appointed; and I venture to suggest to the House of Commons that it would be inconvenient and undesirable to pursue this debate at any length until we have that further information and that further light, without which it would be impossible for us to come to a wise decision.

Mr. BRYCE: I confess myself at a loss to understand why this question has been brought before the House. It cannot have been brought forward for the benefit of the House of Commons, because we have had similar speeches on similar occasions from the hon. and gallant Gentleman; and it cannot have been brought forward for legislative purposes, because we know perfectly well it is impossible for any Government to legislate on a subject on which a Royal Commission is taking evidence. I can only suppose that this subject has been brought forward, not to enlighten us, and not with a view to legislation, but with a view to constituencies outside for which apparently hon. Members think the time of the House of Commons ought to be expended. I am very glad the President of the Board of Trade has taken the only course for a Minister to take, and has declared the entire inability of the Government to deal with this question until this Royal Commission, which is presided over by an eminently competent Chairman, should have reported upon it. It is not for me to add anything to the censure which the President of the Board of Trade has awarded to the hon. and gallant Gentleman; but I think the hon. and gallant Gentleman must himself admit that it would be quite impossible for the Government to accelerate the proceedings of the Commission, having referred to that Commission a question of extreme difficulty. The more one looks into the question the more difficult it becomes. One story is good until another is told. It is perfectly easy to make a strong case against the immigration of destitute aliens, and I do not say that it might not be desirable to have legislation on the subject; but everyone who has dealt with the matter knows how difficult it is to introduce effective legislation. The President of the Board of Trade said, with perfect truth, that Lord Salisbury's Bill, if passed, would have entirely failed to grapple with the difficulty. That certainly was the impression left on me when I had to deal with the matter at the Board of Trade in 1894. I do not profess to say whether the evil is the same, or whether it has taken a different form, but up to then no practical scheme had been suggested; and I am not aware that up till to-day any practical scheme has been suggested for dealing with the difficulty. It is very easy for the hon. and gallant Gentleman to hold up a scheme in his hand, but I should like to know what the Royal Commission would say to it. I remember another scheme of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, for the exclusion of prison-made goods. A Bill was passed for that purpose, but it utterly failed to accomplish its purpose.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: But it has kept out the goods.

Mr. BRYCE: It has not had the slightest effect as far as I know, and the result verified the prediction we made, that legislation would be incompetent to deal with the matter. I should be committing the error I deprecate if I were to express an opinion on this subject. It is impossible to deal with it until the Commission has reported. I shall, and I hope we all shall, keep an open mind upon it. We shall see the gravity of the evil from the evidence of the Commission. The experience of America shows that it is very difficult to deal with; but I think the only proper course for us is to reserve our opinion on the whole matter, and approach the evidence and recommendations which will be submitted by the Commission with a perfectly unbiassed mind. That being the case, I shall not discuss the merits of the matter now. What I rose for was to express my satisfaction that the Government have refused to deal with the matter at present, because I believe that the question is one of so much difficulty that we should not approach it without fuller information than we now possess.

*MR. STUART SAMUEL (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) said he did not propose to enter into this question at any length, for the reason that he did not think the hon. and gallant Gentleman, who had moved the Amendment, and his friends, having asked for a Royal Commission, had practically presented their case.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT said they did not ask for a Royal Commission. They asked for action and legislation; for redemption of promises.

*MR. STUART SAMUEL apprehended that the hon. and gallant Gentleman and his friends did not desire that the Royal Commission should come to an end with only one side of the case presented. Nor did he believe that a Government which had spent so many millions on behalf of the aliens of the Transvaal had any desire to promote legislation until they were acquainted with the findings of the Royal Commission. Hon. Gentlemen opposite first of all asked for legislation against aliens, and that being found to be impossible they called them destitute aliens and tried to obtain legislation against them. The hon. and gallant Member said that the aliens of the East End of London paid rent which the British workman could not afford, and never parted with the key of a house which they had purchased unless they parted with it to one of their own nationality. That was not the sign of destitution, although the latter statement had no foundation. He was not concerned to defend the alien criminal to whom the hon. and gallant Gentleman alluded, but speaking as one who had suffered from their depredations he did not think the home-made thief had much to learn from the alien. Hon. Members must also remember when they spoke of the alien criminal, that the number of English thieves abroad was a matter of common notoriety.

The hon. and gallant Gentleman had alluded to the want of support this proposal had met with from the very class which he claimed to represent. He (Mr. Samuel) representing as he did an East End constituency, and taking an opposite view to that of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, reminded the House that his opposition had some relevancy from the fact that his constituency was the one in which this question had come to the fore in recent elections. The hon. and gallant Gentleman was perfectly right when he said he received no support from the Labour Party. The Trades Union Congresses had rejected time after time similar motions to this which was now before the House, for the reason that any evil in the labour market could be better redressed by trade union methods than by legislation.

It had been said that the British worker had been driven away from London. The fact of the matter was that the British workman would not remain and pay high rents within the London area if he could avoid it; and if he could get to Leyton and Walthamstow, and other places, where he got cheaper houses and better air, he went there. Only those obliged to live in the immediate neighbourhood of the trades now being carried on in the East End lived within the London area. Seventeen years ago, in the constituency which he represented, there were practically no factories; now it swarmed with them. The result had been that these factories had not only taken away dwellings which were suitable for the working classes, but at the same time attracted an enormous number of workers to the locality; and although rents at the present moment were extremely high, he had no doubt that in the immediate future the value of land in that particular area would rise still more in value, owing to the change of the character of the locality from a residential to an industrial centre. As rents rose so the working classes would go outside London; and to his mind that was the proper solution for the overcrowding question in London. Now that communications were so much greater, and the means of getting to and from their work so much easier, there was nightly a steady stream of emigration from inner to outer London. It was not necessary to dwell upon the question of the laxity of the inspection by the local authorities of the buildings, because every authority had a resident inspector to overlook these dwellings. The reason for overcrowding was that particular industries centred in that part, and the constant demand for labour to carry on those industries. In his experience he did not know of any case in which a British workman had been ousted by the alien, and he was confirmed in that by the Chairman of the Whitechapel Board of Guardians, who had stated that he had had similar experience. Such a state of things was not extraordinary when it was remembered that these aliens followed trades which they themselves had introduced into this country to the benefit of the East End of London—trades which, if stopped now, would bring ruin to all the small tradesmen and shopkeepers in the neighbourhood. With regard to the necessity of the dockers living near their work, he might just say in Shadwell there was probably more accommodation available than in any other part of the East End.

Mr. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said he was not surprised at the attitude adopted by the hon. Gentleman opposite, though he was surprised that he should have stated that the labour classes and their leaders were against any legislation for the prevention of this alien invasion. Mr. Joseph Arch, a late Member of the House and the founder of the Agricultural Union, said in his autobiography that while the best British workers were being driven out of the country we allowed the riff-raff of other lands to come freely into England, and that he was strongly opposed to alien immigration. The hon. Gentleman, therefore, was quite wrong in saying the labour classes were against legislation of this kind.

It was ten years ago since he himself had moved an Amendment to the Address on this subject. At that time there were strong grounds for immediate action on the part of Parliament. They had had various enquiries, the result of which certainly afforded strong grounds for legislation. The Government—practically the present Government—in the Queen's Speech of the subsequent session undertook to legislate in this direction; they had not acted up to their pledge, and he thought it was high time that the Government should realise that the country was getting heartily sick of the delay. So far from Members on that side having asked for a Royal Commission, the Commission in their opinion was a "put-up" affair to delay the question. Thousands of British-born workmen were destitute of employment, and yet every day there were brought into the country large numbers of men who must in the long run compete in the national labour market. No small amount of the pauper charges of the country were due to persons driven out of employment by this unfair competition. The minds of the great mass of the people of the country were made up on this question, and, notwithstanding official vacillation, public opinion would enforce its way. He hoped the Commission would hurry up, and that its Report would enable legislation to be promptly undertaken. This country had become a bye-word as being the rubbish-heap of the world, upon which those elements, which no civilised community would retain in its midst, were pitch-forked. All other countries, including our self-governed colonies, had stringent legislation by which to guard their communities from these evils, and it was perfectly monstrous that year after year the Executive here should shirk the obvious duty of dealing with the matter. The country had had enough of the delay, and would not stand it much longer.

Mr. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.), as a member of the Royal Commission at present inquiring into this subject, expressed his surprise that, after spending a considerable portion of the day on that Commission, he should come to the House and find Members pressing the Government immediately to introduce a Bill dealing with the question. The Commission had held over thirty sittings, and heard over eighty witnesses, many of them at great length, and collected a mass of evidence of a most important character. It was for the Government to defend themselves against the accusation that the Commission was a "put-up job," but such a statement was grossly unfair to the members of that body, who at considerable cost of time and convenience had for a long time been devoting their efforts to the elucidation of the question. He had no right to speak in the name of the Commission, or of the Chairman, but he might say that at a private meeting of the Commission that day the Chairman had expressed an earnest desire, in which he was supported by every member of the Commission, that they should bring their labours to a termination at the earliest possible moment, and to that end steps had been taken to compress the remaining evidence as far as possible. Without speaking officially in any way, he thought it highly probable that the Commission would report before the end of the present Parliamentary session. Under these circumstances it seemed hardly reasonable for the hon. and gallant Member to ask the Government immediately to introduce legislation on a subject which had greatly changed in its essential conditions during the last year or two, and therefore concerning which the new evidence was of immense importance.

MR. STOCK (Liverpool, Walton) said that ten years ago, in supporting a Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet, he was able to demonstrate how this matter had affected the rates of Liverpool. The statistics of the Liverpool workhouses showed that during the year no fewer than 436 pauper aliens had passed through them, from which fact Members could gather how pauper immigration affected the rates. He was glad that in the debate no attack had been made on the Jews, but no fair-minded or practical man would contend that immigration of pauper aliens of any creed should be allowed. He hoped, therefore, as soon as the labours of the Royal Commission were over, the Government would see their way to bring forward legislation, as the subject was no doubt becoming an urgent one.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said it was evident that, with a Royal Commission sitting, the Government could not be expected to give any pledge or to introduce a Bill. But that was not the point before the House. The Motion was a vote of censure on the Government for having neglected their promises and broken their pledges on this subject. He for one most cordially desired some legislation directed against the unlimited immigration of destitute aliens, and he looked to the Government to redeem its pledges in this matter if it could not in others. In 1897 the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking on behalf of the Government said—

> "Not only individual Members, but the Government as a whole, are pledged to some legislation on the subject. We do not desire to depart one iota from the pledges we have given; we adhere to every pledge, and I hope at no distant time to propose in Parliament legislation in the direction desired."

That surely meant that the Government not only felt that this was an evil which ought to be remedied, but had thought out the means by which their promises could be redeemed. But the speech the President of the Board of Trade had just made seemed to imply that the Government had given promises on a matter with regard to which they had not made up their minds, and had undertaken to introduce a Bill of which they had not thought out the principle. The right hon. Gentleman had said it was a very difficult problem. Of course it was, but the business of a Government was to solve difficult problems, and, having given pledges, it was still more their duty to solve this problem instead of endeavouring to hush it up by the appointment of a Royal Commission.

With regard to the remarks of the hon. Member for South Wolverhampton, no reflection whatever had been cast on the Commission itself. If a Commission was necessary, the one appointed was an admirable instrument for the purpose; it was an able body presided over by an able Chairman, and would doubtless do its duty in all respects. But that was not the matter under discussion. What they were discussing were the pledges of the Government. It was in the year 1897 the Chancellor of the Exchequer made his promise. In 1898 a Bill was introduced in the House of Lords by the present Under Secretary for War. Lord Salisbury spoke in favour of it, and the Earl of Dudley, speaking on behalf of the Government, supported it. The Government now found that they were not able to draw a Bill, and they had to appoint another Commission. There was another matter in regard to this question. In July, 1900, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was then President of the Board of Trade, and he was approached with regard to this very question. Upon that occasion he said the only reason why the subject had not been dealt with was that the House had been engaged in other business, and implied that they had a Bill ready. Never, in all his Parliamentary experience, had he seen a more flagrant violation of absolute promises and pledges given, not only on the hustings, but also to hon. Members of that House, and given deliberately by Members of the Government. They had promised to draw a Bill and to introduce it, and the only reason they gave for not doing so was want of time. And now the right hon. Gentleman told them that afternoon that it was impossible for the Government to do what was required or draw a Bill without referring the latter to a Royal Commission. He thought it was necessary for the right hon. Gentleman to give the House some further information.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman's speech should have been made last year; it is a year too late.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that really he did not think the right hon. Gentleman was entitled to say that he ought to have made this speech a year ago. The debate on this question last year was a very short one. Hon. Members would remember that it came on at the end of a Sitting, and his hon. friend behind him was anxious to say something. But he was obliged to condense his remarks into a very few minutes, and had he himself wished to say anything upon that occasion it would have been impossible for him to do so. Promises and pledges given by the Government were not for one year or another, and if they could show that such pledges had been broken, it was equally effective in 1903, as in 1902. This Royal Commission ought never to have been appointed, for it was quite obvious that it would not be worth while to discuss the principles of this question at any length now, but he should like to say one or two words to show that, although he was in a minority on this side of the House on this question, still he knew that his views were held by a good number of hon. Members sitting on the Opposition side as well as on the other side of the House. There was no racial or sectarian feeling of any kind in this matter. He did not care whether the alien emigrant were Jew, Turk, or infidel, or what nationality he belonged to; what he objected to was the refuse of Europe being dumped down on these shores. It was not so much a question of actual numbers, nor of pressure in localities, and concentration upon certain trades of these aliens. That was where the evil came in, and it was especially great in some parts of London. His hon. friend had said that the trades unions could look after the working hours of these people, but destitute aliens were ready to accept very low wages and long hours, and this made it impossible in some trades for trades unions to be formed at all. The result of this system was that work was put into the hands of the worst class of employers.

One of the most important points in regard to this matter was the question of housing. He believed that everybody in that House was desirous of seeing a better class of houses and a larger number of dwellings erected for the working classes. It was impossible to expect that they could improve the housing of the poor so long as the refuse of the rest of Europe was permitted to come into this country. In the present condition of the working classes of this country it was not right that they should allow these destitute emigrants to come in unchecked to reduce the rate of wages and lengthen the hours of work, and seriously affect the proper conditions under which labour ought to be carried out. The President of the Board of Trade asked what remedy they suggested. He thought that was a matter upon which the Government ought to have made up their minds. This question had been dealt with in America, where they sent back annually something like 300 destitute aliens, and they all came back to this country. What could be simpler than to put the obligation in this matter upon the steamship companies? Quite 80 per cent. of these destitute aliens came to London; and, practically, the whole of them came to three ports in this country, and came from four continental ports only, and there would be no difficulty about it. The administrative difficulties had been greatly exaggerated, and if the Board of Trade made up its mind to deal with this question and put the responsibility on the steamship companies they would prevent those destitute aliens coming here. At present they gave the greatest possible encouragement to the immigration of these destitute aliens, and if they could not exclude them altogether they ought to take steps to discourage their entrance into this country. Although he could not vote for his hon. friend's Motion under the circumstances, he for one was glad to have the opportunity as a Liberal Member, and as a Member representing a constituency in the East End of London, to raise his voice in this House in protesting against the influx of destitute aliens to the very great detriment of the working classes.

*SIR J. BLUNDELL MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich), said he rose to thank the hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield for bringing forward this question. He had no wish or desire to turn out the Government for this neglect of their duty, but a great many of those who took a great interest in the labour questions of the country must feel that the time had come when this question should be dealt with most thoroughly. And now the President of the Board of Trade simply passed over the question as a subject which had been recently sprung upon the Government, but it was no such thing. In 1894 Lord Salisbury himself brought forward a Bill on this question in the House of Lords, when his Lordship declared that the Board of Trade should prevent anyone who was either an idiot, an insane pauper, or was likely to become a public charge, or was affected with contagious disease, from landing in this country. Such a Bill as that was a very simple question, and a strong and powerful Government ought to have no difficulty in framing such a measure.

Why should we have thousands of destitute women and children swarming into our midst? A Bill dealing with this question had been carried by eighty-nine votes to thirty-seven, and still they found the Government doing nothing. Private Members had a very great deal of difficulty in forcing upon the Government the importance of dealing with subjects in which they were interested, and although he should not vote for this Amendment this was the only way in which they were able to show the Government that they did not intend that important subjects like this question of the immigration of destitute aliens should be allowed to go unheeded and uncared for. It was all very well for them to be a powerful Party, especially on great Imperial questions, but the Government should understand that they had subjects at home which were also dear to them, and they strongly appealed to the Government to give these subjects attention and endeavour to deal with them.

It was a disgrace to them to see so many unemployed able-bodied men walking through the streets of London. And why was it? Because destitute aliens were allowed to come into our midst in thousands to labour at a price which English workmen could not accept. He was certain that there were many Members on the Government side who would like to speak in similar terms to those he had spoken in. They felt that it was the duty of the Government to bring forward such legislation as this, and he was greatly surprised to hear the President of the Board of Trade say that they had not enough information, and sufficient intelligence, at the Board of Trade to frame a Bill which would put a curb upon this immigration into our midst of such a large number of useless individuals, in many cases useless paupers, and the sooner they had some one at the head of that Department who would deal with this question, the better.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said he was one of those who sat on a Committee that inquired into this subject some years ago. It was quite true, as the President of the Board of Trade had said, that it was difficult for the Government to legislate while the Royal Commission was sitting; but it should be remembered that this was a subject which had been before Parliament for nearly twenty years, and that the feeling in London was very strong upon it. It was a difficult subject, for although we objected to these people coming into the country, we sent a great many out. It was clear, however, that some legislation was desirable, and there was no doubt that even the mention of legislation would have a great effect in preventing many of these people from coming over. There was a general idea on the Continent that any rubbish, so to speak, could be shot on these shores. This was a state of affairs that a very little legislation would stop. It should be understood that this country was not an asylum for those who were destitute and who were in such a state of dirt that they should not be imported. When the Committee of which he was a member was sitting, a number of aliens were brought before them, but on account of their condition they had to be excluded from the room. It was very painful to have to say so. To have hundreds and thousands of that class landed and kept here was a very serious state of affairs. He suggested to the President of the Board of Trade that he should hurry on the labours of the Royal Commission as rapidly as possible so that this evil might be put a stop to.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said he could not adopt the view expressed by the right hon. Member for South Aberdeen, who joined the President of the Board of Trade in deprecating discussion and doubting whether it had any value. He thought this debate had been of great value. It had drawn a declaration from the right hon. Member for South Aberdeen of which, no doubt, the public, and especially the London public, would take due note. It had also been an occasion on which the hon. Member for Poplar had been able to announce his views as an influential London Member—views which he owned were not shared by the majority of his Party. The House had also had from the hon. Member for Whitechapel certain statements which he would venture to refer to. He could not help thinking that the hon. Member could scarcely have meant what he said when he stated that not a single British workman had been ousted by these foreigners. If he would honour him with a visit to Hoxton he could show him premises which had been occupied by British subjects for close upon a century, who had been ousted from their homes and trades by aliens. The hon. Member must be gravely ignorant of East London if he could state as he had just done that the cabinet making industry did not exist in the East End before the aliens had become numerous and where the question of alien immigration was now constituting a serious evil. The hon. Member had also alleged that we, after all, could not take exception to the arrival on these shores of foreign criminals because there were British subjects incarcerated in the prisons of foreign lands. He was one of those who had had the advantage of visiting prisons in many parts of Europe, and he would venture to say that the proportion of British subjects whom he had found serving terms of imprisonment in these was infinitesimal as compared with the proportion of foreigners who were undergoing sentences in London prisons for serious offences.

He joined the hon. Member for North Islington in saying that they should not be guided absolutely by what fell from the President of the Board of Trade, when he said that it was impossible that the Government should embark on any legislation pending the Report of the Royal Commission on the subject. The etiquette in the matter of Royal Commissions should be departed from when judicial statistics and the opinions of the judges of the High Court, together with returns which could be obtained from prisons, afforded irrefragable evidence that alien immigration constituted an urgent and intense social danger. If hon. Members would look into the statistics of the criminal courts of London, they would find that a very large proportion of the offences—in some instances, as his hon. friend the Member for Sheffield had said, 25 per cent. of the whole—were committed by foreigners. That being the state of things as stated on the authority of magistrates at first hand, why should the Minister responsible await the presentation of the Report of the Commission before taking steps to remove a crying evil from the very centre of our national life? This evil constituted a most serious burden on the taxpayers of this country. Only about a fortnight ago at one of our courts a Frenchman, who was a well-known professional criminal in France, was sentenced to seven years penal servitude. At the expiry of his last term of penal servitude in France he was banished from the country. The convict was conducted to a ship and sent off to these shores, with the result that within a fortnight of his arrival in London he committed a serious burglary, coupled with a dastardly and brutal attack on some person. Assuming that the cost of maintaining criminals in prison was £40 per head per annum, the British taxpayer was now saddled with a charge of £280 for this Frenchman.

The position, he submitted, was one which was not, after all, so difficult as appeared to be thought by the President of the Board of Trade. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen said that he doubted whether any legislation would be really effective. Any one who had given attention to the subject knew that though the American law might not be absolutely effective, the Act was, nevertheless, a very great deterrent in the sense that not only did it prevent people from going to America, but enabled the authorities there to ship back to England those who were refused admission because they were not considered fit for the country. These rejected aliens were sent here because they would not be readmitted by the European countries from which they originally came. What was the experience of any British subject who went to reside in any country in Europe? Immediately he arrived at an hotel his name was written down and given to the police, and he had every sort of inquiry to answer. If we were now to take steps for the exclusion of paupers and undesirable aliens, we should simply be doing, in the twentieth century, that which every foreign country in Europe had done for sixty or seventy years past.

There was one point in regard to the criminal aspect of this subject on which he and others on that side of the House would press for an answer from the Government. Why should the 16 per cent. who were aliens of the felons now incarcerated at Wormwood Scrubs at the expense of our fellow citizens not be taken out of the country, so that we should not have the possibility of their being again convicted as *recidivistes?* They all knew that the men of whom he spoke were not first offenders, but were men who had been stamped with crime from their earliest manhood. A disappointing feature to many inside and outside the House who had had this problem, and the evils which flowed from it, pressed on their minds, was the absolutely limp attitude taken up in regard to it by the great majority of Gentlemen sitting on the other side of the House. Surely in a matter affecting the social condition of our people they should discard Party politics and press the subject on the Government, and aid them all they knew in every endeavour to put, by rigorous legislative measures, an end to that which was physically and morally a gigantic evil in our immediate midst. The economic question involved was one upon which he need not touch, except to say what was the use of all those great public Acts dealing with the health of the people if they permitted this influx of destitute and unclean aliens to continue, and if those laws were to remain a dead letter. He asked any man who had any knowledge of the east, north, south and, he might add some parts of the west of London, any one engaged in the administration of their laws, how they could attempt to enforce them when their enforcement would drive the dwellers into still more overcrowded neighbourhoods? This question not merely impinged upon, but was inseparable from, some of the great social problems which lay at the root of true Imperialism, and which, referring for a moment to the debates in the earlier part of the week, would render any scheme of Army reform utterly useless—more especially if they allowed the population of the towns to grow up in the miserable conditions under which they were born and had to pass the younger years of their lives. It was because he, and those who were accredited with the desire of pursuing a policy of pin-pricks towards the Government—which accusation was not well-founded—believed that if the Government saw that they had the support on this subject, not of their own side only, but of all quarters of the House, they would pass the measures demanded of them that he welcomed the Debate. He thanked his hon. and gallant friend with all the warmth at his command for initiating the debate which, though it might not have filled the Benches, excited a very real and sincere interest among the great mass of the people.

SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington) said he could not help thinking that his hon. and gallant friend had done good service in introducing this subject to the attention of the House; and if he had done nothing more than spur the Government to take some action, his object would have been attained. But the position of the House was rather curious, for they had the responsible Minister of the Crown telling them that he had not material enough on which to legislate, while members of the Royal Commission alleged that this question had changed very much in the last two or three years. He hoped, therefore, his hon. and gallant friend would not divide on his Amendment.

*MR. BONAR LAW (Glasgow, Blackfriars) said he had been very much interested in the speech of his hon. friend on the front Bench opposite; but he could not help thinking that there was a great deal of force in what had been stated by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade that that speech would have been much more appropriate and more effective if it had been delivered before the Royal Commission was appointed. He could not admit that the argument the right hon. Gentleman had brought forward was relevant. The hon. Gentleman told the House that he did not have in his pocket the speeches containing the broken pledges of the Government to which he had referred; but this question had not come for the first time before the country, and if it was the duty of the hon. Gentleman to bring it before the House that day, it was equally his duty to have done so a year ago, when it was within his power to have produced those references to the speeches of the Members of the Government.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said he really must make an explanation. He had had no opportunity of bringing the matter forward last year, and even if he had, he was not then aware that the Government were going to refer it to a Royal Commission. He could not be expected to carry about with him all the speeches of Members of the Government in regard to this or any other matter.

*MR. BONAR LAW said that this was really not a matter of much importance, nor had the explanation of the hon. Gentleman altered what he had been saying. But he was certain that if the hon. Gentleman had desired, speaking from that Bench, to take part in the debate last year, he might have found an opportunity, and have come prepared to do so. The hon. Member for Poplar had told the House that the views he expressed were expressed as a Liberal and also as a Member for a London constituency. He would like to ask the hon. Gentleman how much of these views were represented by the Liberal and how much by the London constituency.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said he would endeavour to explain. So far as he was aware, there were very few aliens in his constituency—possibly fewer, indeed, than in the constituency of his hon. friend the Member for Bethnal Green; but being interested in the East End of London, he felt the matter was one of great magnitude.

*MR. BONAR LAW said that the real subject which he wished to bring before the House was this: What was it that his hon. and gallant friend the Member for Sheffield thought the Government could possibly do under present circumstances? A Royal Commission had been appointed, and after the statement given by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, who was a member of that Commission, and what had been said to him by other members of the Commission, he would ask his hon. and gallant friend whether he would not readily admit the legislation after the Report was presented to the House was likely to be more valuable than legislation now before the Commission had reported? He had, however, really to assure the House that there was no absence of sympathy on the part of the Government with the evils brought before them to-day; and the quotations made by the hon. Gentleman opposite really showed that the Government fully realised those evils, but while realising them they felt more than irresponsible Members of the House what their duty was. His hon. friend the Member for Shoreditch had referred to the restrictions put on ordinary travellers on the Continent; but he asked the House whether they would readily pass legislation which would cast similar restrictions on travellers in this country. Those were some of the difficulties that the Government would have to meet in introducing a Bill. He was authorised by the Government to state that they fully realised the evils referred to, that they were most anxious to be in a position to consider the matter, and that the moment the Royal Commission handed in its report, and not before it, they would consider it, with the view of seeing whether it was possible for them to do anything by way of legislation.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT said that, under the circumstances, and after the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Board of Trade, he did not think that it would be wise to press his Amendment to a division—realising, as he did, that the right hon. Gentleman spoke not only for himself but for the Board of Trade and the Government, and he begged leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

MILITARY EXPENDITURE OF THE INDIAN EMPIRE.

MR. CAINE (Cornwall, Camborne), moved as an Amendment to the Address, at the end, to add, "And, having regard to the great poverty of the Indian people, and to the fact that 30,000 troops of the Indian Army have been used in other parts of the world in which India has no direct or substantial interest, we humbly express our regret that Your Majesty's speech contains no recommendation for the reduction of the military expenditure of the Indian Empire." Having been engaged during the last two days in discussing the alarming increase in British Army expenditure, it appears to me that this Resolution should be moved to give an opportunity to consider the question of Indian Army expenditure, and whether or not, in justice to, and for the safety of, India, some relief may be given to that country. I will not attempt to criticise the efficiency of the Indian Army in any way, but certainly it ought to be the most efficient, because it is the costliest, army in the world. From its very nature it should be so, for India is the only country in the world which does not depend on its own sons for its national defence, but depends on the paid aliens of a foreign overlord. The Indian Army consists, roughly, of 75,000 British troops, 150,000 Indian troops, 20,000 Indian Reserves, 30,000 Volunteers, and 16,000 Imperial Service Corps, or a total of 290,000 men at a cost to India of £15,000,000, or £52 per head. The British Army came next, its total cost for all branches being £29,000,000, or £21 per head. The French Army costs £20 per head; the Russian Army £10; the German Army £9; the Austrian Army £7; the Turkish Army £7; the Italian Army £4; and the Swiss Army, the best for national defence in the world, £2 5s. Not only is the Indian Army the costliest in the world, but it is imposed on the poorest nation in the world. It costs 75 per cent. more per soldier than the British Army; it is four times dearer than the French Army; five times dearer than the Russian Army; six times dearer than the German Army; seven times dearer than the Austrian or Turkish Army; and twenty-four times dearer than the Swiss Army. Lord Curzon, whom no one who knows him would charge with being a pessimist, places the average wealth of India at £1 6s. 8d., or less than 1d. per day per head of the population. Upon so poor a community a rich overlord like Britain has no right to impose any expenditure except for the benefit of India, or any armament not absolutely required for peace at home and defence from foreign foes.

No one will contend that India has any aggressive policy. Unhappily, however, the expenditure on its Army is steadily increasing. In 1884 it was Rx17,000,000; in 1888 it was Rx21,000,000; in 1893 Rx23,500,000; in 1898 Rx24,000,000; and in 1903 Rx27,000,000. This latter figure includes the saving of Rx. 1,500,000 by the loan of troops to the British Government. We are informed by the Secretary of State for India and by

Lord Curzon, that a further increase must be expected. Already from Rx. 70,000 to 80,000 has been imposed on the Indian taxpayer for additional pay for the Army; and in all probability in a year or two the expenditure on the Indian Army will reach Rx.30,000,000. What is the Indian Army wanted for? I hold it is wanted only for the maintenance of peace and order in India, and, secondly, for defence from foreign invasion. I know of nothing else for which it is required. But during the last fifteen years the additional duty has been imposed upon the Indian Army of providing a great reserve force for the general defence purposes of the British Empire, towards which the British Exchequer does not contribute a farthing. I will not speak a word of my own in justification of this statement; but I will venture to read two paragraphs from a speech delivered by Lord Curzon to the Council during the discussion on the last Indian financial statement. He said:—

"It is, I think, generally known that it was by the loan and prompt dispatch of British troops from India that Natal was saved from being overrun by the Boers at the beginning of the South African campaign. It was the holding of Ladysmith that prevented them from sweeping down to the sea. That service has been publicly acknowledged by the Commander-in-Chief in England and by the Secretary of State for War."

I hope these services will be acknowledged by the more decent treatment of Indians who have settled in South Africa. The Viceroy proceeds:—

"It is also known that it was an Indian General commanding Native troops from India that relieved the legations at Pekin, and further, that, in the absence of our European troops elsewhere,"

—this was spoken ten months ago—

"it has been Native regiments by which our garrisons in China have since been supplied. But the extent or value of our contribution in either case is perhaps imperfectly understood. Since the beginning of the war in South Africa we have sent from India 13,200 British officers and men to that country, of whom 10,000 are still absent. Over 9,000 Natives, principally followers, have gone with them, of whom 5,600 are still away. To China we sent 1,300 British officers and men, nearly 20,000 Native troops, and 17,500 Native followers, of whom 10,000 Native soldiers and 3,500 followers are still away. I venture to say that these are very large and handsome contributions."

I wish our wealthy self-governing colonies made such large and handsome contributions to national defence. The Viceroy further says:—

"I would like to mention another respect in which we have been of service. This had been in the provision of ammunition, stores and supplies."

The Viceroy then read a list of articles which had been sent to South Africa and China; but throughout his speech he did not say a word about the danger to India of taking away such a large number of men to engage in the fiercest military campaign since Waterloo. The peace of India was still maintained. Russia did not invade the frontier, and India was able to send all these troops without any risk of danger to herself.

In 1885, Lord Dufferin, who was then Viceroy, with the consent of Lord Randolph Churchill, then Secretary of State, increased the Indian Army by 30,000 men. For fifteen years this wholly unnecessary increase has never been used either for maintaining the peace or defending the frontier of India. Now these men are taken away from India to be employed in the defence of self-governing Colonies in an Imperial war, to make war in China, or against remote African tribes, or for garrisoning Crown Colonies to relieve British troops for the South African campaign. To provide this reserve force for possible contingencies in the Empire outside India, the Indian people have, since it was imposed upon them, paid out of their penny a day something like £36,000,000. My contention is that India has no use for these 30,000 extra troops imposed on her at a time of panic, and that they are neither more nor less than a reserve force for the British Army, as is amply proved by Lord Curzon's speech. This increase followed the Penjdeh scare; but the Penjdeh scare was followed by a wise delimitation of the frontier, to which Russia agreed. The fifteen years that have passed since then have been years of almost unbroken quiet in Central Asia. During the same period Russia has become absorbed in the development of her superb Siberian territories, and the Russian scare has become the deadest of all bogies, except to the Prime

Minister, and even he declared in his speech on Tuesday night—

> "I think that a war between Russia and Great Britain is to the last degree improbable."

I ask him if he thinks it is worth while to maintain the salt tax in India, and to starve irrigation works in order to pay for the maintenance of Lord Dufferin's 30,000 additional troops. Since 1885, we have been far nearer war with other countries than with Russia. At one time we went near war with the United States. We have a frontier with the United States of 3,000 miles, which could be crossed by an Army at any point for 2,000 miles; but what would Canada say if we imposed an Army Corps on her finances because we might have a war with the United States? If we did that, we should lose Canada, and serve us right. In India, with an impregnable frontier of 300 miles of the most difficult mountain passes, we maintain an Army, the costliest in the world, to defend the poorest country in the world against a Power that would not take India and its responsibilities as a gift, to say nothing of taking it as the result of a life-and-death contest with a great naval and military Power like Britain. Russia's feeling towards India was perfectly expressed by Prince Gortshakoff in 1887, when he declared "the conquest of India by Russia to be a perfect impossibility, and, if practicable, an act of supreme folly." Lord Salisbury once spoke of the dread of a Russian invasion of India as "an antiquated superstition." I want no three better authorities on this question than the present Prime Minister, the late Prime Minister, and Prince Gortshakoff. The first says that a war between Russia and Great Britain is in the last degree improbable; the second speaks of the fear of the invasion of India as an antiquated superstition, and the third as a perfect impossibility and an act of supreme folly. These 30,000 men were added to the Indian Army as a result of the Penjdeh scare. Their continued inclusion is in flat contradiction of all accepted authority with regard to the purposes for which they were added.

The time has long since passed for the relief of India from this intolerable burden; but when the day arrived for the whole 30,000 troops to be taken away from India for service in countries where India has neither a direct nor an indirect interest, the continuance of this burden on Indian finance becomes an infamy. If the 30,000 troops are wanted for the defence of India from Russian invasion, and the Governments of Britain and India really believe this, what are we to say of the statesmanship that takes the whole of them from 2,000 to 5,000 miles away from the Indian frontier at the very crisis in our history that furnished the only possibility of success for Russia if she had any such intention. I ask the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for India if they believe that Russia has sinister designs on India. If they do not, for what purpose do they still maintain these 30,000 men who were added because that belief had some shreds of justification fifteen years ago? If they think that Russia has sinister designs on India, how could that justify the withdrawal of these troops to distant service at a moment that would certainly be chosen by an enemy, when this country was involved in the greatest military struggle she has ever had to face since Waterloo? It could be done with absolute safety. No one doubts the word of the Indian people. I am quite sure my noble friend the Secretary of State will agree with me that never in the history of India were people so loyal as they are to-day. If the Durbar means anything it means that. But we can only hold India while her peoples are loyal to British overrule. It is such acts of barefaced injustice as the continuance of the 1885 addition to the Army, after using the whole of them for our own purposes, that tend to loosen the attachment of the Indian people.

Educated public opinion in India is not slow to speak out. The Indian National Congress, the most representative body of men in all India, passed this resolution on the subject:—

> "That this Congress enters its most emphatic protest against the fresh permanent burden of £786,000 per annum which the increase made during the course of the year in the pay of the British soldier would impose on the revenues of India, and views with alarm the recent announcement of the Secretary of State for India hinting at a possible increase in the near future of the strength of the British troops in the country. In view of the fact that during the last three years large

bodies of British troops have, with perfect safety, been withdrawn for service in South Africa and China, the proposal to increase the strength of the British garrison manifestly involves a grievous injustice to the Indian taxpayer, and the Congress earnestly trusts that the proposal will either be abandoned or else be carried out at the cost of the British Exchequer, who in fairness should bear, not only the cost of any additional British troops that may be employed, but also a reasonable proportion of the existing garrison."

It is not for one so ignorant of military affairs as myself to suggest how, or in what direction, Indian Army expenditure should be reduced. It might, however, take the form of a grant-in-aid from the British to the Indian Exchequer on the understanding that 10,000 British and 20,000 native troops of the Indian Army were to be treated as a Reserve Army Corps for the defence of the Empire, or for any warlike operations east of and including Cape Colony and Egypt. Lord Curzon claims that this 30,000 loose and available troops saved South Africa, and I think the claim is a good one. It is monstrous to lay the burden of saving our great self-governing colonies upon India without asking those colonies to contribute either to the protection of India or to the cost of Imperial defence, and it is idle to say that the Imperial Exchequer bore the cost of the Indian troops during service abroad. India bore the cost of their recruiting and transport and of their maintenance for fifteen years during which they were there for Imperial use when wanted, and now India is called upon to shoulder the burden rendered heavier than before until another foreign emergency arises. Sir, I have endeavoured to put the case for my Resolution in as short a time as possible, and I now beg to move the Amendment standing in my name.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): In rising to second this Motion, I feel that I ought not to occupy too much of the time of the House in doing so, neither do I think it necessary to make any apology for bringing forward a Motion of this character at this stage of our parliamentary proceedings. It is generally admitted on this side of the House that India does not receive from Parliament that consideration which she ought to do, and it is absolutely necessary for us to grasp any opportunity which we may have at our disposal for bringing before this House and the country questions of vital interest to India. I think it is not unnatural that we should select as our special subject for consideration to-night the question relating to the Army in India. As my hon. friend who moved this Motion has already pointed out, military matters have absorbed and are likely to absorb a great deal of our Parliamentary attention in the present session, and if it is right for us to pay special attention to the question of the possible reduction of military expenditure at home, I think every one will admit an equal, if not a greater, duty lies upon us to consider whether this is not possible in the case of India. India, as is well known, pays the whole cost of the British Army in that country. I do not know whether it is clearly realised that India pays more than one-third of the total cost of the British Army, and when we in this country are called upon by the Government to-day to consider a change in the organisation of the Army—British and Indian—it is right, I think, that we should bring the question of our responsibilities to the Indian taxpayer prominently before this House.

There are two primary points which I should like to mention upon this, indications which, I think, are of good omen with regard to the treatment of the Indian question in this House in the future. The first is that there is an evident disposition to regard India in this House from a non-political point of view, and the second is a growing sense of the fact of the importance of India to our Empire. Now there are three main points which lie within this Motion. The first is the necessary and inevitable fact that there continues in India to-day a widespread poverty; the second that some retrenchment in some direction in regard to taxation is absolutely necessary; and the third is in accordance with the terms of this Motion, and it is that we believe that the direction in which this reduction should take place is the direction of the Army. I am not going to dwell on this question from the standpoint of poverty of the Indian people. I only regret it is not possible in considering a great matter such as this to sweep away on the one hand official optimism, and on the other the pessimism which is perhaps inevitable on the part of those brought face to face with the poverty of India, in order to get at the facts. What we want to take is not an exaggerated view on one side or the other, but the facts of the case, and it ought, and I believe it is, the desire of everyone within these walls to act in accordance with those facts, and to shape the policy of that country in harmony with their own. But there are one or two outstanding features in regard to the great poverty of the people of India which I will, in one sentence, and only one sentence, refer to. No one who has studied Indian matters during the last few years will doubt that the fact that the effect of the unprecedented famines that have occurred recently in that country are still present in the lives of the people; and that that gives emphasis to the special means now being considered. I read the other day in the *Pioneer*, an able newspaper in India, which has been all along in loyal support of British Administration in that country, a statement to the effect that nearly 100,000,000 of the people of British India lived in extreme poverty, and if we look in other directions we find the same facts prominently pressed on our attention. To conclude this particular part of my statement, I think everyone must admit that the widespread poverty of the people of India does continue, and that it must necessarily be greater and more acute by reason of the great number of famines and other evils which have afflicted that land for fifty years past. This makes it all the more necessary, when we in this House consider to-day whether it is not possible to reduce taxation, to consider in what direction this reduction should take place. I think I shall carry the House with me when I say that before we can develop the industrial resources of India we must lighten in some way the burden of taxation which now rests upon the people of that country. No one who knows anything of India will deny that it is of the utmost importance to emphasise the necessity of developing the industrial resources of the country. What we want is what the Viceroy said in his speech the other day at Calcutta. What we want in India is capital. What we want is to bring about a condition of things which would result in the flow of capital into that country. And what I hold is, that we must give this question of industrial development in India more and more thought and attention, and in doing this we cannot lose sight of the necessity of reducing, as far as possible, taxation which arises from unproductive expenditure. In other words, before we can hope to make India permanently prosperous, we must lessen the burden of taxation on the people.

I now come to the third part of my remarks as to the special direction in which this lightening of the burden of taxation should take place, being that of military expenditure. One or two questions arise under this head. First of all do we or do we not get full value for our money in connection with the British Army in India? I do not intend to go into that, because that has been dealt with by my hon. friend who moved this Amendment. The second question is, is the force we have in India at present excessive for Indian purposes? I know very well in the long run we must depend on the judgment of our military advisers in regard to this part of the question; but, after all, military advice is not always infallible, and I agree with my hon. friend in thinking that so far as the purpose of preserving international peace and security in India itself is concerned, there has been ever since 1885 an excessive force established in the country. I do not think I would venture to express this opinion, were it not based on a somewhat close study of the views of those mainly responsible for the government of India. But I will mention just one statement made by Sir Auckland Colvin, an Indian administrator of great reputation, whose judgment on this question will be accepted by everyone in this House. In 1897, Sir Auckland Colvin made this statement—

> "Up to 1885 the military authorities in India were looked upon as responsible only for securing the country against internal danger."

Since then a change has taken place. There have come plans and projects for securing India against attack from Central Asia, with the consequence that—

> "Almost every consideration for the good government of India has been made to yield to the alleged requirements of defence against external attacks."

In considering this question I am not placing the opinions of those who think they represent the people of India against those of the Government of India, but rather the opinions of those who are responsible for the government of India against the opinions of the War Office at home. About twenty years ago, a Commission was appointed to inquire into military expenditure in India, and the then legal member of the Viceroy's Council, in his Minute of Dissent from the Report, made this statement—

> "A standing army which is larger than is necessary for home requirements will be a tempting and almost irresistible weapon of offence beyond the borders."

I think the events of the last twenty years, the adoption and abandonment of the so-called forward movement, and the millions of money it has involved, are a vivid commentary on that statement.

The third question which arises on this Amendment is this: Supposing it be granted, for the sake of argument, that the present force in India is not excessive for internal and external purposes, is it right to charge India with the whole cost of that military force? In his reply the Secretary of State will probably instance the Report of the Indian Expenditure Commission, which recommended that a certain sum should be paid in settlement of the claims made by the Government of India in reference to home charges. But that Report was made on the assumption that the United Kingdom and India must be kept strictly separate in the calculations made. At the same time it is said in that Report that—

> "The Home Government has derived and does derive great benefit from the existence of a large effective force in India."

In other words, the Commission in the same breath say that you must treat India and England separately in this matter, and that you must realise that India is conferring a great benefit upon this country in military matters. I do not think it is incumbent upon me, or upon any Member on this side of the House, to make any suggestion as to the solution of this question. I read the other day an interesting article by another able administrator, Sir Edwin Collen, in which, about ten months ago, he made this suggestion—

> "There is, I think, only one way out of the difficulty, and that is by England foregoing the annual charges for the training of men sent to India, while India, on the other side, accepts the cost of reforms which are necessary for the general welfare of the whole Imperial Army."

I am not competent to pronounce an opinion whether such a solution of the difficulty would be a proper one; I only mention it as showing that such men as Sir Edwin Collen and others, who have had life-long experience and responsibility in regard to the administration of Indian affairs, admit that something ought to be done, and that there is an obligation due to India from this country on that account. The revenues of India have been charged with the cost of many changes of organisation, not directly necessary for the efficiency of the Indian Army. The most recent case in point is the extra expenditure of £786,000 per annum, which will be imposed upon India by the changes now being carried out in the Army system. To take this step, and to burden India with this large annual charge, destroys once and for ever the validity and the finality of the Report of the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure, because what you give by that Report you more than take away by this additional charge. The Indian Expenditure Commission has not solved the problem; we are faced with it to-day in an aggravated form.

Let me, in conclusion, mention some of the dominating features in the situation. I am one of those who believe that India is the pivot upon which our supremacy in the East turns; I believe in the growing importance of India from an Imperial standpoint. The trade of the Empire may be accounted for, roughly, in these proportions: 61 per cent. to the Home country; 23 per cent. to the Colonies, and 16 per cent. to India. From that standpoint it is necessary that we should seriously consider our obligations to India. Then, from a military standpoint, I believe that we should maintain in India a force adequate for internal purposes; but if it is necessary to maintain there a force adequate for external purposes—and I am not one of those who say it is not necessary—we ought to make such a contribution to Indian finances as will substantially pay the additional cost. In regarding India as a necessary part of the British Empire I think we should do something to strengthen the bonds between that country and this. It is necessary for us not only to relieve the strain of taxation in India, but also to promote the growing consciousness that they are one with us, and that they are, in reality as well as in sentiment, a bulwark of the Empire. I beg to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

> "And, having regard to the great poverty of the Indian people, and to the fact that 30,000 troops of the Indian Army have been used in other parts of the world in which India has no direct or substantial interest, we humbly express our regret that your Majesty's Speech contains no recommendation for the reduction of the military expenditure of the Indian Empire."—(*Mr. Caine.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MAJOR EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said that inquiries had been made in various parts of the House as to the necessity for the maintenance of three Army Corps of Regular troops in this country, and the Prime Minister had declared it to be an Indian necessity. That was a startling reason, and one requiring more explanation than had as yet been given. If this pressing necessity existed, surely the country should have heard of it before now. If India was really in that dangerous position it was a terrible thing that the country should have been kept entirely in the dark. Not a word was mentioned on the point at that critical moment when large bodies of troops were withdrawn from India for service in other parts of the world. If India was in need of reinforcements the proper course was to increase the Army in India itself, as the military position of that country would not be improved by maintaining large bodies of troops consisting of five-feet-two-inch inefficient men on Salisbury Plain or at Aldershot. If the Government came to the conclusion that the Indian frontier was in danger, then let them, for Heaven's sake, send out more troops now before war broke out. What would be our actual position if war broke out? They would not be able to send a single man unless they had previously destroyed or locked up the Russian Fleet. If more troops were necessary for India, let the Government enlist the necessary number of Gurkhas, Sikhs, Pathans, and others, who were the finest military material in the world, and keep them on the spot. Some ridicule had been cast upon an hon. friend of his for expressing certain opinions with regard to Indian matters.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and gallant Member seems to be continuing the debate which was raised upon the Army question. The question before the House is simply how far the cost of the troops in India should be charged upon the Indian revenue.

MAJOR EVANS GORDON said he spoke with some small knowledge of Indian matters, having spent twenty years of his life in India. He trusted that this Amendment would not be accepted, and that if India was in the serious position which the Prime Minister and the Government seemed to think, far from reducing the military expenditure, the proper step to take would be to increase it without further delay, not by keeping troops in this country, but by maintaining a larger number of troops on the spot where they might be most urgently required.

* THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The hon. Member who brought this question before the House pointed out that his Motion was in a sense similar to that which was moved a few days ago in connection with Army expenditure in this country; but the facts on which the two respective Motions are based soon parted company. The present period is one in which the military expenditure of every country is rapidly increasing, with one exception, and that is to be found in India. I did not wish to interrupt the hon. Member who moved the Amendment in regard to his figures, but he seemed to have a

statistical department of his own; his figures differed from official returns. He gave the military establishments as 290,000; I do not know where the hon. Member got his figures from, but the number should be 220,000.

MR. CAINE: I got them from the official returns. I have not figures of my own.

LORD G. HAMILTON: But nobody would include among the regular military establishment the Volunteers and Reserves.

MR. CAINE: I was making a comparative statement of the cost of the various armies of different countries, and I took all the effective forces of this country upon a war footing. I supposed that the Volunteers and Reserve forces might be used in India in a war.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: It is an absolutely indisputable fact that during a period of great military expansion throughout the world the Indian Government alone has kept down military expenditure. During the seven years I have been in office the military establishment has grown from 219,000 to 220,000, and the military expenditure has advanced from £16,400,000 to £17,100,000; and it seems to me that when the Indian Government accomplished this remarkable feat of keeping down expenditure and increasing efficiency it is not a result that deserves the censure implied by the Amendment. I think that if the growth of the military expenditure in this country had been so slight the Government would have met with universal thanks from the House of Commons and the taxpayers. Per head, the Indian Army is necessarily costly, because it is largely composed of white men taken from our own country, and, being supplied on the voluntary system, it is necessary to offer the men sufficient pecuniary inducement. While located in India great precautions for preservation of health are necessary, and this involves large expenditure, and still the death-rate is far higher than it is in this country. It is quite true the cost per head is great, and it is equally true that a large proportion of the taxation is supplied by poor people; but the hon. Member does not mention two governing facts of the situation—the area of the country in which the military establishment is retained, and the fact that the military establishment of India is much smaller in proportion to population than in any other Government in the world. Of course the establishment, being small, it must be made efficient.

The hon. Member went on to say that India had an almost impregnable frontier, and seems to imply that the small force maintained is in excess of requirements. But the hon. Member is aware that the history of India long before the establishment of British rule is a continuous record of invasions over that frontier which he describes as impregnable. Nobody can say that, if our rule were withdrawn or insufficiently supported, India would not again be subjected to similar invasions from warlike tribes inhabiting the regions to the north and west, and who from time immemorial have been taught to look on the plains of India as their natural prey. Therefore the establishment is moderate and, in proportion to population, less than that of any other Government in Central Asia. The Russian establishment in Asia is ten or twelve times as great in proportion to population. But the hon. Gentleman's main argument in support of the Motion for reduction is that during the crisis of the late Boer War a considerable number of men were sent to assist the Imperial forces in different parts of the world. I quite admit it. But surely the hon. Member must know that in times of great national stress some risks may legitimately be incurred which in normal times would not be justified. Lord Curzon, with characteristic courage, did deplete his military establishment by sending 6,000 white men to Natal and 17,000 native troops to China. No one can dispute that the despatch of those forces was a most effective aid to the British arms, and well they upheld British prestige. During that period there were scarcely any Regular troops in this country; but the hon. Member would surely not argue that therefore the home establishment was too large, and that it should be reduced to the figure at which it stood during the

Boer War. Such a proposition would be absurd and nonsensical. Lord Curzon, in the speech to which the hon. Member referred, never gave a hint that in his judgment the normal Indian establishment was too large. I do not think the hon. Member would be able to get any responsible military authority to admit that our present military establishment in India is in excess of the needs of India, or more than is required to guard against certain dangers which are always present.

Then my hon. friend referred to the speech made by the Prime Minister the other night. I do not think that he quite grasped the significance of what my right hon. friend said. My right hon. friend did not describe India as being in serious danger, nor did he speak of the probability of a war between England and Russia, but he pointed out that it was a possibility, though he thought it was a very remote possibility. He said there was in the same way a remote possibility of a war between Germany and Russia. But if that contingency did occur it would necessitate very large reinforcements being sent from this country to augment and bring up the Indian establishments to the standard necessary to combat such a danger.

AN HON. MEMBER: May I point out to the noble Lord that that is a contingency and a danger that has existed for years past?

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: My right hon. friend said there was the possibility. He said nothing more than that.

MR. BECKETT (York, N.R., Whitby): Why three Army Corps?

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Possibly in the past sufficient attention has not been given to the organisation and training of soldiers, and if these matters have been brought to light now it is incumbent on the Government of the day to try to remedy them in what they believe to be the most effective manner. I now come to what I think was the method of relief the hon. Gentleman suggested, and that was that a certain number of men on the Indian establishment should be maintained and paid for out of the Imperial revenue and kept in India. I cannot say that that is a proposition which in any way commends itself to my mind.

MR. BECKETT: It would be cheaper than the three Army Corps.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I am not going to argue about the three Army Corps. I am arguing as regards the dimensions at which the Indian establishment should be kept up. All these establishments, as my hon. friend is aware, are organised on the Army Corps principle. I say that what the hon. Member suggests is not a proposition that I can assent to. I believe nothing would be more dangerous than to put nominally under the control of the Indian Government certain forces paid for by the Imperial Government, because it would follow that the Imperial Government would have control over those forces. Each party, the Imperial Government and the Indian Government, would rely on being able to use the same troops, and it is not unlikely that at the critical moment some large combination might utterly fail if each Government were to rely on such an arrangement. Whatever men are on the Indian establishment must be absolutely under the control of the Indian Government, just as those on the Imperial establishment must be under the control and direction of the Imperial Government. What the Prime Minister in his speech the other night really made clear was possibly new to Members of the House, namely, that the possession of India does put such a strain on the military system as is in no way compensated for by the payments made, and therefore it did follow that the taxpayer and the military system of this country were subjected to constant pressure in consequence of the possession of India, which puts upon them a very considerable strain. I have always felt that while it is necessary to fight, and to fight hard, to secure justice between the Indian and the British exchequers, so far as the apportionment of charge is concerned, for services in which they have a common interest, the fact that India is a charge upon the Imperial revenue ought never to be forgotten. I believe that the connection between India and Great Britain is beneficial to both; we gain largely, commercially and otherwise, but the greater gain, I think, is to the inhabitants of India. We have so swept away the oppression and misgovernment which prevailed that we have really eradicated the recollection, and I quite agree with the hon. Gentleman that India is the foundation—I think he said the pivot—of our Imperial interests in Asia. If that be so, both Great Britain and India must combine together to preserve those interests, and each must bear a part of the charge that falls on their exchequers. During the past seven years we have been able to improve the efficiency of the military establishments.

The hon. Gentleman who seconded the Amendment alluded to taxation and to charges, and he put those against the revenue which the Indian Government receives. I am glad to say that, notwithstanding the period of exceptional drought through which we have passed, we have been able to bear all the extra expenditure connected with that drought, and yet year after year we are realising a considerable surplus. I am glad to say that the agricultural prospect is improving and that we have been able to close Indian relief establishments which we were obliged to maintain for a considerable number of years. I do believe that the prospects of commerce and agriculture in India are improving, and if we can only have normal years there is not the slightest doubt that there will be an increase under every main head of revenue, and as we have already a certain surplus, we hope to be able to remit taxation. We shall keep our military establishments up to that level in India to which it is the universal opinion of our military advisers it is necessary to keep it, at the same time carefully supervising all expenditure connected with these establishments. That is our first duty, and the next is to endeavour, in the years ahead of us, so to adjust our income and expenditure that we may be able in some way to reduce the burdens that the Indian people now are suffering from. Here perhaps I may remind the House that for the last seven years no additional taxation whatever of any kind has been imposed in India. It seems to me that this is not an Amendment which should be pressed to a division.

Question put, and negatived.

Main Question again proposed.

RAILWAY RATES IN IRELAND.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) moved an Amendment representing that the railway charges for agricultural and other produce in Ireland are excessive, and that the general management of Irish railways is such as to require immediate inquiry and reform. He regretted that when attention was called to this matter the Chief Secretary, some time ago, did not see his way to grant an immediate inquiry, because there was no doubt in the mind of the great majority of the people of Ireland that rates and charges were excessive, and that they were strangling the trade and industry of the country. The Government had granted the railway companies a monopoly, and it was their duty to see that the monopoly was conducted in a way fair to everybody. He did not complain of the shareholders expecting dividends, but his complaint was that the whole system of railway management in Ireland was bad. The hon. Member quoted certain rates charged on English and American railways, and contrasted these with the rates in Ireland, in order to show that the latter were greatly in excess. The rate for bacon from Chicago to Liverpool was 22s. 6d. per ton—a distance of 3,000 miles by water and 1,000 miles by rail—while from Ireland to Liverpool the rate for the same merchandise was 18s. 4d. per ton, only a little less for a few hundred miles than the American rate for carriage for 4,000 miles. It had been said by the Chairman of one of the Irish railways that the railway rates in Denmark for agricultural produce were higher than those in Ireland. This he denied. The distance from Copenhagen to Hamburg was 220 miles, and the rate was 10s. 8d. per ton; the distance from Cork to Dublin was about 120 miles and the railway rate was 16s. 8d. per ton. Those figures proved very clearly that there was something very wrong in regard to Irish railways, so far as their charges were concerned, and showed why an inquiry should be made into those charges.

The Chief Secretary had said that the Irish Board of Agriculture was accumulating facts; but he wished to draw the right hon. Gentleman's attention to what had happened in England. The Minister of Agriculture in England had directed attention to the charges for freights on English railways for agricultural produce, and the Chairman of the Great Eastern Railway, Lord Claud Hamilton, told the Minister of Agriculture that if he minded his own business equally as well as the railway directors minded theirs, the Board of Agriculture would be properly managed. That was his opinion in regard to the Irish Board of Agriculture inquiring into railway rates in Ireland. He urged the right hon. the Chief Secretary to go on accumulating facts in regard to the management of railways in Ireland, and he was sure that the result would be that some improvement would take place. There were no fewer than 300 directors in Ireland for 3,000 miles of railway, or one director for every ten miles. That of itself was enough to show why there should be mismanagement of the Irish railways. The directors said that the reason why they were unable to charge lower rates for Irish traffic was because of the smallness of the consignments; but he contended that they offered no inducement to Irish traders to send more than 10 cwts. in each consignment, for the large traders received little more benefit from the rates than the small consignors. Generally speaking everybody in Ireland was agreed that there was need for some inquiry into railway charges there, and he thought that the Chief Secretary ought to hurry up the Irish Board of Agriculture in getting their facts ready for a Commission of some sort to deal with the matter.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.) begged to second the Amendment. He confessed he had been very much disappointed by the reply of the Chief Secretary the other day to a question of his in regard to the appointment of a Departmental Committee to inquire into this matter. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the subject was not yet ripe for such an inquiry. He wished to know when it would be ripe, because they in Ireland had been agitating for over half a century for a Royal Commission, and the same stereotyped answer had been given over and over again to their demand. He had asked for something much more modest than a Royal Commission—a Departmental Committee. He was sure that if such a Committee were appointed most valuable material would be obtained by the Government. This question was of enormous importance to the entire population of Ireland, for everyone knew that the railway rates there were more extravagant than in any other country in Europe.

From the returns prepared by the Board of Trade the average rate per ton of merchandise carried on Irish railways was 38 per cent. in excess of the English rate, and 34 per cent. in excess of the Scotch rate, and this notwithstanding the fact that the cost of construction of railways in Ireland was remarkably low in comparison with the cost in England and Scotland. England offered to Ireland a market large enough for the consumption of all her agricultural produce, but they knew that Irish industries had been in a languishing condition for a long time, due in the first place to the land system in Ireland, and in the second place to the Irish railway system. He hoped that now that the Chief Secretary was turning his attention to relieve Ireland from the incubus of landlordism, he would follow that up by ridding that country of the incubus of its railway directors. Several steps might be taken towards the solution of this vexed question. It would be useless to urge anything in favour of the nationalisation of the Irish railways, but he thought the Government might consider a practical suggestion for meeting the difficulty which had been made by Archbishop Walsh of Dublin. That suggestion was that, following the Canadian precedent, the Government should induce the railways to reduce their rates by 30, 40 or 50 per cent., subject to a guarantee from the State to provide a dividend in case the experiment should not prove a financial success. But at least a Departmental Committee should be appointed without delay to place all the facts of the case before the public.

He had been reading in the *Daily Telegraph* an article on the previous day's debate, in which they were informed that all legislation for Ireland seemed to be based on some sort of travesty of the Scriptural injunction "Ask (with a blackthorn) and it shall be given unto you; knock (with a blunderbus) and it shall be opened unto you." Now that all of them who were connected with Irish affairs were in a very good humour with one another, he would appeal to the Chief Secretary to give his personal attention to this question of transit and transport in Ireland, both by railways and waterways, because it was most vital to the prosperity of the country.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question to add the words—

"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the railway charges for agricultural and other produce in Ireland are excessive, and that the general management of Irish railways is such as to require immediate inquiry and reform."—(*Mr. O'Mara.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The hon. Member for South Kilkenny, and the hon. Member who seconded his Amendment, have brought forward a subject of great interest and vital importance to Ireland; but they at the same time knew perfectly well that during the present session there was no probability of the House dealing with it. I would be only wasting the time of the House, therefore, if I were to pretend that we could, during the present session, deal with the question of Irish railways. But that does not by any means preclude the desirability of reconnoitring the situation with a view of considering in greater detail what action may be taken in the future. I may say that that is what I have been doing. Through the Agricultural Department and the officers of other Departments, I am at the present time collecting provisionally as many facts as I can bearing upon the question of transit and transport in Ireland. But when I am asked to appoint a Commission or Committee of some sort, I must tell hon. Members that almost everybody in Ireland at the present moment is thinking of, and labouring for another object, and I would get a great deal less information on this subject if I were to call away the attention of any official from it. I think we must concentrate ourselves more or less on the land question. Reference has been made to a statement in a letter by the Archbishop of Dublin in regard to what has been done in Canada; but in April, 1901, I myself referred to the Canadian precedent as one that possibly we might some day follow. Certainly it would be absurd for me to say that it would be at all likely that the Government of this country would consent to deal with the question of Irish railways in the near future. I should have thought that the history of the land question would have warned us that we had better not take up this question by trying to penalise directors. We had better seek to elicit the interest of all classes in transit problems and encourage private enterprise. The hon. Member for St. Stephen's Division of Dublin (Mr. M'Cann) has recently brought about a working experiment in respect of waterways, which is, I think, of supreme interest. The River Boyne may have associations ultimately connected with it other than those which are historical. It had been opened to free navigation by barges from Navan to Drogheda. The boats have been built in County Meath, and they were allowed to pass down this canal for no charges, provided they gave facilities for carrying agricultural produce of convenient bulk at very low rates, and that has already brought a certain amount of prosperity to Meath, and increased the value of the land all along the sides of the canal. That is a useful work, and if those who are concerned in Ireland, when we have done something to settle the land question, will concern themselves with the transport question, then I think it will be found that such benefit as may accrue from the settlement of the land question will be multiplied, it may be threefold by the settlement of the transit problem. I do not think I ought to detain the House at greater length. I need only quote what I said two years ago. I said then—

"I am very glad we have had this debate. The subject is one that deserves the consideration of all parties in the House. But I cannot disguise the fact that it is interlocked with other economic questions in Ireland— interlocked with the land question, and so long as that is in an unsettled state, so long as we do not get either from the landlords or from the tenants, and much less from both combined, the pressure which we would get in England or Scotland upon other economic questions—it is difficult to make progress on other economic questions."

If that was true then it was true now, but if the landlords and tenants did combine to settle the land question they would combine also to settle the transport and other problems.

*MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) said that the hon. Member who moved the Amendment had rendered a good service by eliciting a very sympathetic answer from the Chief Secretary. There was no doubt that the cost of transit heavily handicapped agricultural interests in Ireland; and that some remedy must, sooner or later, be found for the existing state of things. He, however, agreed with the Chief Secretary that all the attention of the House, and all the energies of the Irish Members, should, for the present, be concentrated on the great problem of a good land measure, that would finally settle a question which almost for centuries had been at the root of every Irish trouble. The question of railway rates was one of peculiar difficulty, because it should be remembered that railway companies were not philanthropic institutions, but commercial undertakings; and that it was impossible without doing very great injustice, especially in Ireland, to impose the obligation of carrying goods and passengers at rates below what the principles of ordinary management would require. There were only four really large railway companies in Ireland. What were the facts regarding them? One paid no dividend on its ordinary stock; two paid, for the last half-year, a dividend on the ordinary stock of, he thought, 3½ per cent.; and only one—the Great Northern—paid anything like a large dividend. In making that observation he did not at all minimise the importance of the question. The moment the land question was settled, it would certainly be incumbent on the Minister of the day to have a departmental inquiry or a Royal Commission for the purpose of ascertaining whether some remedy could not be applied to the matter. The nationalisation of the railways would be one remedy; he was not arguing in favour of that, but it was worthy of consideration. There was also the question of guaranteeing a certain dividend, as had been already done in the case of small branch railways. But the subject could not be considered by this House during the present session. It would require all their attention to pass a Land Bill that would do justice to all classes in Ireland, and would ultimately be of substantial benefit to the Empire.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green) said he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that they should concentrate all their efforts on the settlement of the land question; but while they were waiting for that, they found that the development of trade in Ireland was materially harassed by the existing system of railway rates. He agreed with the Chief Secretary that a great deal had been done by the hon. Member for the St. Stephen's Green Division; but still they had to bear in mind what the railway companies were doing all over the country. In a journal published in this country it was stated that it was cheaper to send a ton of mineral ore from Wexford or Clare to England *viâ* America than to send it direct. He held that the arguments of his hon. friend who moved the Amendment should receive the attention of the Chief Secretary and the Government. At present it did not pay farmers in inland districts in Ireland to produce agricultural produce for the English market because of the railway charges; and something should be done in the matter while they were waiting for the Land Bill. He thought it was the duty of the Government to see that all the railway rates were of a similar class, and that no preferential rates were granted on one route over another. They believed, rightly or wrongly, that the question of railway rates was at the bottom of some of the ills they complained of with reference to the non-development of the resources of Ireland, and he hoped an inquiry would be instituted into the matter. He cordially supported the Amendment.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said he agreed that there was very much in what the Chief Secretary had said. It was a large question involving very great interests powerfully represented in Parliament, and a question which could not be settled without a great deal of discussion in this House. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had exercised a wise discretion. He was face to face with a question of supreme importance affecting the country he governed in the settlement of the land, and he had done, he thought, the right thing not to approach another great question in which all the influence in this House would combine against him. If the land question were settled in the new spirit that prevailed they might tempt the railway directors into a conference at the Mansion House.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign*,

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."

To be presented by Privy Councillors and Members of His Majesty's Household.

SUPPLY.

Resolved, That this House will, upon Monday next, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to His Majesty.

Ordered, That the Civil Services Supplementary Estimates, 1902–3, presented to this House on the 24th day of this instant February, be referred to the Committee of Supply.—(*Mr. Hayes Fisher.*)

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolved, That this House will, upon Monday next, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to His Majesty.—(*Mr. Hayes Fisher.*)

And, there being no further business set down for the Afternoon Sitting, Mr. Speaker left the Chair until the Evening Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

BANK HOLIDAYS (IRELAND) BILL.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [25th February], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question put, and agreed to: Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

LIGHT LOCOMOTIVES (IRELAND) BILL.

Read a second time and committed for To-morrow.

Adjourned at two minutes after Nine o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 27th February, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—

Scottish American Mortgage Company.
Life Association of Scotland.
Fife Electric Power.

Also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—

Lanarkshire and Dumbartonshire Railway.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

LIFE ASSURANCE OF SCOTLAND BILL [H.L.],

NORTH CHESHIRE TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],

TYNEMOUTH AND DISTRICT TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Presented; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

FIFESHIRE ELECTRIC POWER BILL [H.L.],

LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITY BILL [H.L.],

MARYPORT HARBOUR BILL [H.L.].

Presented, and read 1^a.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EXPLOSIVES.

(Explosion at the Factory of Messrs. Curtis and Harvey, Limited, at Lower Hope Point, near Cliffe, Kent.)

Report to the right hon. the Secretary of State for the Home Department, by Major A. Cooper-Key, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, on the circumstances attending an explosion of partly mixed cordite paste, which occurred at the factory of Messrs. Curtis and Harvey, Limited, at Lower Hope Point, near Cliffe, Kent, on 15th December, 1902.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

BANK OF ENGLAND.

Applications made by the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Governor of the Bank of England for advances to Government, authorised by Parliament, from 5th January, 1902, to 5th January, 1903. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 27th February, 1903.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

SUBSTITUTED BILLS PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in respect of the following Bills introduced pursuant to the provisions of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, and which the Chairman of Ways and Means had directed to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with, viz., Fife Electric Power Company; Life Association of Scotland; Scottish American Mortgage Company, Limited.

SUBSTITUTED BILLS PETITION (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, introduced pursuant to the provisions of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz., Lanarkshire and Dumbartonshire Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Urr; Thurso; Latheron; Cadder; Reay; and Kilrenny; to lie upon the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

PIRTHIPAL.

Petition of Pirthipal, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Gorton, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EXPLOSIONS.

(Explosion at the factory of Messrs. Curtis's and Harvey, Limited, at Lower Hope Point, near Cliffe, Kent.)

Copy presented, of Report by Major A. Cooper-Key, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on the circumstances attending an explosion which occurred at the factory of Messrs Curtis's and Harvey, Limited, at Lower Hope Point, near Cliffe, Kent, on the 15th December, 1902 [by Command]: to lie upon the Table.

PAUPERISM (ENGLAND AND WALES) (MONTHLY STATEMENTS).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 24th February; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 41.]

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1902-3).

Copy presented, of Supplementary Estimate of the further amount required during the year ending 31st March, 1903, to meet expenditure in excess of that provided for in the orginal Army Estimates for the year, for the pay, &c., of the Army [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 42.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1903-4.

Copy presented, of Army Estimates of effective and non-effective services for the year ending 31st March, 1904 [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 43.]

ARMY (ORDNANCE FACTORIES, 1903-4).

Copy presented, of the sum required for the year ending 31st March, 1904, to defray the expense of the Ordnance Factories [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 44.]

Papers laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House:—

Irish Land Commission (Account).—Copy of Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General upon the Account of the Irish Land Commission for the year ended 31st March, 1902 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 45.]

Bank of England.—Copy of all applications made by the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank of England for advances to Government authorised by Parliament, from 5th January, 1902, to 5th January, 1903 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 46.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Labourers' Cottages in the North Dublin Rural District.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in a portion of the North Dublin rural district, it had been decided, previous to the recent extension of the boundaries of the city of Dublin, to erect a number of labourers' cottages, with plots of land attached, and that, owing to the inclusion within the city of the district referred to, it has been impossible to add any plots of land to the cottages in question; whether he is aware that the tenants of those cottages entered into agreements to pay rents calculated on the assumption that half-acre plots would be attached to the cottages, and have since paid such rents, though they have got no land attached; and whether he will take steps to enable the Corporation of Dublin to carry out the housing scheme in the district mentioned as originally formulated.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The tenants agreed to take a cottage, with yard and plot of ground, "containing in the whole not more than half-an-acre." The Corporation are advised that they have no legal power to comply with the application for larger allotments.

Alleged Grievances of Customs Boatmen.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): To ask the Secretary of the Treasury if he can say when a reply may be expected to the representations made to the Board of Customs in February last on behalf of the Customs boatmen.

(*Answered by Mr. Hayes Fisher*) Proposals affecting the whole Waterguard Department have been made by the Board of Customs, and are now under the consideration of the Treasury.

Customs Preventive Officers—Promotions from Boatmen.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the Board of Customs have recently selected four Customs boatmen of from eight to nine years' service for promotion, on examination, to the rank of preventive officer, thus passing over some 300 men of longer service; and whether, seeing that such promotions have previously been made with reference to seniority, he will explain upon what principle the present selection has been made.

(*Answered by Mr. Hayes Fisher.*) The Board of Customs are calling up sixty boatmen for qualifying examination for the grade of preventive officer. Of this number fifty-five have been selected with reference to seniority and character as in previous years, and the remaining five by selection from the whole class of boatmen on the ground of special merit.

Smallpox in England and Wales.

SIR MICHAEL FOSTER (London University): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state the number of districts in England and Wales in which smallpox is now prevalent, and the number of cases; and whether in any district the number of cases has been so great as to lead to special measures on the part of the local authority.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Since the beginning of the year 2,397 cases of smallpox have been reported to the Local Government Board as having occurred in 212 urban and 59 rural districts. The outbreak is practically confined to England and Wales north of Birmingham, but it is chiefly in towns of Lancashire, Yorkshire, and the North Midlands that the disease is prevalent. Seventeen of the larger towns in those districts have had a considerable number of cases. I am glad to say that the sanitary authorities of the places concerned have been very active in taking measures with a view to stamping out the disease. Many of the places affected have been visited by a medical inspector of my Department, and in most of the other cases I have communicated with the sanitary authority on the subject. I shall continue to watch the course of events and to urge on the local authorities the adoption of any measures which may appear to the medical advisers of the Department to be desirable.

Great Northern Railway of Ireland—Obstruction at Strabane Station.

MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the fact that, owing to the obstruction of the station master and officials of the Great Northern Railway at Strabane in preventing free passage through their premises of persons desirous to get to the Donegal Railway, certain passengers to both Great Northern Railway and the Donegal Railway have been obstructed and refused admission to the platforms by closed doors and porters collected to keep them out; and whether he will cause inquiry to be made into this matter, with a view to preventing its recurrence.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) Yes, Sir; representations were made to the Board of Trade, and the Department entered into communication with the Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland with the object of ascertaining the facts of the case. I gather that the whole question resolves itself into a dispute about an alleged right of way, and the determination of such a matter as that rests, of course, with the Courts of Law and not the Board of Trade.

Marine Works (Ireland) Act—Kinvara Harbour.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware of the state of Kinvara Harbour owing to the accumulation of silt and want of pier accommodation; and whether the claim of this harbour to receive assistance under the Marine Works (Ireland) Act has been favourably considered; and, if so, when will steps be taken to carry out the improvement.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The allocation of the funds provided by this Act will be discussed at the conference to be held to-morrow.

Explosion of Gun Cotton at Woolwich—Origin of Manufacture.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state whether the gun cotton that exploded in Woolwich Arsenal on Monday, 16th February, 1903, causing the death of two workmen, and injuring severely three others, was manufactured by private contract or at Waltham Abbey.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) This gun cotton was supplied by a private firm, and was under trial at the Arsenal.

Property and Income Tax in Scotland—Dates of Collection.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will explain why the demand notices for the Property and Income Tax were issued in Scotland in the months of September, October, and November, generally two months earlier than in England; and whether, having regard to the promise made last session by his predecessor, the dates of collection of these taxes will be made the same henceforth in both countries.

(*Answered by Mr. Hayes Fisher.*) As the facts referred to are somewhat complicated I have caused a Memorandum to be prepared, of which I am sending a copy to the hon. Member; he is at liberty to make any use of it which he desires. He will observe that there is now no ground for the impression that Scotland is more strictly treated than England. The first notice in Scotland is a notice of assessment as well as a first demand note. Accordingly it is sent out at approximately the same time as the English notice of assessment.

OUTDOOR RELIEF (FRIENDLY SOCIETIES) BILL.

Motion made and question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Edward Strachey.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): I should not like this Bill to be read a second time without a few words from the Government Department responsible for a measure of this kind. Although the Bill passed its Second Reading by a very large majority on a previous occasion, it unfortunately met with an untoward fate elsewhere. The Bill has been very much criticised both in the Press and in other places, and the allegation has been made that when it passed its Second Reading in this House last year that result was obtained without the matter having been sufficiently considered by the Government. I state most emphatically that there is no foundation whatever for that suggestion. In the first place the Bill has been most carefully considered by my Department, which is responsible for the Poor Law administration of the country; it has been carefully examined by experts and men of great experience in the administration of the Poor Law, and I have most carefully considered it myself. In addition to that the Bill was most carefully considered by the Cabinet as a whole, and it was decided that it was worthy of the support of this House and one which we sincerely hope to see accepted and placed on the Statute Book. I know that the Bill has met with the opposition of the Charity Organisation Society and its secretary, Mr. Loch. Everybody who is familiar either with former Poor Law administration, or with charitable administration generally, must be convinced of the admirable work done by Mr. Loch and his society; and if only people would consult what is the best way of dealing with unhappy cases of destitution brought to their notice, I say it would be far better to keep their money in their pockets or give it to the Charity Organisation Society than to pay it out in casual relief. It is impossible to over estimate the good work done by the Charity Organisation Society and its able secretary, but notwithstanding that fact I cannot agree with them that a Bill of this kind would tend to weaken the administration of the Poor Law, or would bring us back, as some have alleged, to the condition of things revealed in the Report of the Royal Commission of 1834.

Nobody desires to do anything, either by legislation or anything else, to bring us back to the condition of things which prevailed before the Poor Law Act was passed. On the contrary it is because I am convinced that a Bill of this kind would not only not weaken, but would rather strengthen, the administration of the Poor Law, that I ask the House to read it a second time. It is said that this Bill would not do any good, for under the existing law Boards of Guardians have a discretion to consider the amount received from other sources by applicants for relief. I am, as a rule, strongly in favour of maintaining the independence and the position of local authorities, and of reserving to them their discretion. But this is not a case in which the discretion of the Board of Guardians meets the difficulty; and for two reasons. In the first place, what the members of the friendly societies ask for, and are entitled to, is that they should be given this privilege as a right, and that it shall not be dependent on the discretion of any Board of Guardians; and in the second place, a very unfortunate result follows from the different action of different Boards of Guardians. It may be that there are two men living on the confines of different Unions. In the one Union special consideration is shown to the case of one of the men in his application for relief, while in the adjoining Union the applicant is put on a level with the other paupers. Can hon. Members wonder that in the latter case the man has a feeling of degradation and asks the question: "What was the good of my joining a friendly society"? In the wise administration of the Poor Law, which has been the practice now for sixty years, we desire to do two things. In the first place, to separate the wastrel from the unfortunate; and, in the second place—and this is by far the most important of the two—to strive to teach the people lessons which will lead them to be self-supporting in the future and not to need the assistance of the Poor Law. We have done a great deal in recent years in regard to the first. In the large Unions very different accommodation has been provided for the honest, suffering poor; and I am happy to say the treatment of the wastrel, while not inhuman or unchristian, is much more severe and better regulated than it used to be. I hope that that will always be the case. But it is in the promotion of thrift, of self-help amongst the people, that we are likely to find the best remedy for pauperism in the future.

I am sure that this Bill will have the effect of teaching the people that it is worth their while to join Friendly Societies, and to make an effort in the days of their strength and prosperity to be independent of the Poor Law when the day of sickness comes. I have been anxious not to occupy unduly the time of the House, for I believe that this Bill meets with general acceptance. I think that idle and baseless allegations have been made against the Bill. I support the Bill with the utmost satisfaction because I believe it is a step in the right direction, and that legislation of this kind will be likely to teach the people to be self-respecting, thrifty, and provident, and so to build up a self-reliant community.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said he took a somewhat different view from that which had just been stated by the President of the Local Government Board. He did not think that anyone would accuse him of want of sympathy with providence on the part of the people. For a good many years he had brought in a Bill which he called the "Thrift and Out-door Relief Bill." There were two or three very serious matters which, it seemed to him, had been overlooked in the present Bill. For example, it gave prominence to one special form of thrift—that was to say, it compelled men, if they were to get a special benefit from their thrift, to enter a Friendly Society. But there were other forms of thrift that ought to be encouraged, such as the Post Office annuities, and it was sometimes inconvenient to join a special form of Friendly Society. No doubt the Friendly Societies were doing an immensely good work, but, at the same time, it was well known that many of them were not in a sound condition, although many of them were alive to the necessity of putting themselves in a secure position. Now, this Bill simply said that a man should belong to a Friendly Society. It did not specify the particular Society, or the time he must have been a member of it. He believed that a general scheme would have been very much better. From the criticisms which had been made on the Bill last year by Mr. Loch in connection with out-door relief, he was afraid that unless it were made something like his own "Thrift and Out-door Relief Bill" not much good would be done. There was no doubt that the great test for out-door relief was destitution, and under the present law it was proved that the more improvident a man had been the better chance he had of getting relief. That was an evil in the past and was working very much to the detriment of the promotion of thrift. Unless a lever were provided for promoting self-help and self-reliance no good would be ultimately done, but a great deal of harm. The great object they ought to have in view, however hard it might prove, was to induce people to make an effort to help themselves. He hesitated to oppose the Bill, but when it came to the Committee stage he would move Amendments which would strengthen the principle of thrift, as he did not think that the Bill went far enough in that direction.

COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince) said that some of the pensions given to soldiers were so very small that it was impossible for them to live upon them. He was anxious to see a provision for such cases included in the Bill, because it was a very serious thing for recruiting for the Army when it was understood that a soldier might be put into the workhouse when receiving a small pension.

*MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said he was glad they had received the promise of support from the Government in reference to this Bill. He spoke as a member of a Friendly Society conversant with the working of such bodies, and he was sure the words which had fallen from the President of the Local Government Board that afternoon would be received with gratitude by all Friendly Societies. He represented a class of people in Lancashire, many of whom received wages under £1 per week, and who, out of that money, endeavoured to put by something for a time of sickness and old age. Under the rules of these associations, after a man had received a certain amount of full pay and of half pay, he was put on quarter pay, which became practically a pension. A small sum was paid to him although he was not ill in the sense of being confined to bed, but was ill enough to be unable to work. That pension or quarter pay amounted to 2s. 6d. or 3s. per week, and he thought it was most unfair that the Guardians should take into consideration at all any amount like that. When a man had been provident enough in the past to secure for himself this small amount of money, some assistance in addition, he knew, was a great help. He believed that in many cases this relief was absolutely essential, but it should be made known to the public that there was a difference between a man trying in the best days of his life to prepare for old age and those who did not try. Those two classes of men should not be treated under the Poor Law equally. He desired to thank the President of the Local Government Board for his sympathetic references to Friendly Societies, and to say that the supporters of all such Societies would equally thank him.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): This is a Bill introduced by the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton and myself for the purpose of increasing the jurisdiction of local courts in the administration of justice, and also with the object of decreasing the delay in the trial of questions and the cost of obtaining judgments. No notice of opposition to the Bill has been given, and the question has been so frequently discussed in this House that I think it needs but little advocacy on my part. The jurisdiction of the County Courts rests on the Act of 1888; and, speaking generally, the limit of that jurisdiction is £50. The object of the Bill is to substitute in the County Courts Jurisdiction Act £100 for £50 where the latter sum appears. The House will, I think, agree with me that, having regard to the existence of the County Courts, the development of their jurisdiction, and the confidence which the public have in them, the time may be considered to have arrived when this extension of their jurisdiction is perfectly justifiable. I would not take the House through the alterations proposed in the original Act—the alterations being mainly verbal. In Section 56, what I may call the personal jurisdiction of the Court has been increased from £50 to £100, and others of a cognate order. There are cases, such as that of a minor who seeks to recover wages, where the jurisdiction is increased from £50 to £100, and there are provisions of a similar character which refer to the recovery of small properties. Frequently a trespasser has to apply to the High Court for such relief, and the costs there are often as much as the fee-simple value of the property. These cases will now be subject to local jurisdiction. Again, on the question of costs the present rule is that where less than £20 has been recovered in the High Court in an action which might have been tried in the County Court, no costs, are recovered, and if the sum is between £20 and £50 scale costs only are recoverable. That indicates that in the opinion of Parliament there should be a proportion between the amount sued for in the Court and the costs to be awarded. When one thinks of the very large expense frequently incurred in cases for advocacy, for witnesses, solicitor's fees, and the like, especially when the action is tried at a distance from where it originated, I think it ought to be a very serious question of principle which would justify a recourse to the High Court for the recovery of any sum less than I have indicated in the margin of the Bill. I speak from experience, having been registrar of a large County Court for many years. There is public confidence in these Courts; their judgments have worthily secured the approbation of public feeling; the administration of justice in them is acceptable; and the change which I venture to advocate is one which is desired.

I confess, if I were dealing with this subject from an ideal instead of a practical point of view, my own proposal would be to confer unlimited jurisdiction on County Courts, with the right of removal to the Superior Courts of any proper case approved by a judge. The present rule is that parties may agree to give the County Court unlimited jurisdiction, and the consequence of that rule is that one party very seldom approaches the other to ask for that consent, because it is thought to indicate weakness, and would probably lead to a refusal. But if unlimited jurisdiction were given *primâ facie* with the right of removal on any question of fact or law, I believe that a very large part of the litigation of this country would be transacted in the County Courts. I say this, firstly, because I believe the tribunals have the confidence of the public; and, secondly, that a trial on the spot, with certainty as to when the case would be reached, instead of witnesses and others being delayed in some assize centre, or in London, with uncertainty as to the hearing of the case, would be endorsed by public feeling, and would conduce, as far as practicable, to the principle of the local administration of justice. The success of the district registrars of the High Courts is appreciated locally; but the trial cannot take place locally. It may take place at an assize, which involves cost and delay. Owing to the Judicature Act and the County Courts Acts, many local courts, like that of Hull, have fallen out of practice, and are not resorted to because the Judicature Act has not been applied to them by the authorities, who prefer the jurisdiction of the County Courts. But if an improved practice, making the local courts more available, is refused, I think a great claim is established for some increase in the jurisdiction of the County Courts.

I am informed, and believe, that the Bar, as a whole, would not be opposed to this change. It would not affect the leading members of the Bar; and, as regards the Junior Bar, they are now more localised, and the various local courts would have the advantage of their advocacy. While the system continues as it is, and while so many actions have to be entered for trial in London, the expense in many cases, especially those covered by the Bill, must be out of all proportion to the amount involved; and it is with the object of securing more certain and less expensive justice that I have introduced this Bill. It has the support of the Incorporated Law Society, and of Chambers of Commerce; and I believe it has the support of the public generally. I quite admit that, owing to the somewhat sudden ending of the debate on the Address, the Bill may come somewhat suddenly on the legal authorities; but I am going to make a proposition to the Attorney General which I hope he will accept. I quite agree that no private Member could hope to carry a Bill of this character through the House if it met with the opposition of the Government. Therefore, I would propose to the Attorney General that he should consent to the Second Reading, and I will at once say that the Government can then exercise control over the Bill. If they feel it ought to be enlarged, or that some additional provisions as to practice should be introduced, or that the time has not yet arrived for it, I am quite willing to sacrifice my own opinion, and to invoke the aid and co-operation of the Government in securing what I believe to be a large and beneficial measure in the interests of the local administration of justice. I hope, in these circumstances, the Attorney General will see his way to accept what, in my opinion, is a reasonable proposition.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): There is one observation of my hon. and learned friend which, I think, everyone who has had any experience of legal matters will confirm, and that is the extent to which County Courts have earned the confidence of the public. They have done most admirable work and are admirably conducted. The question of extending their jurisdiction has been brought forward from time to time. A great many proposals have been made, one by my hon. and learned friend himself, that the County Courts should have unlimited jurisdiction, giving, at the same time, complete power to the High Court to remove cases which seem to be more properly tryable in the High Court. Any proposal of that kind, although it may be discussed in a general way, is one which cannot be possibly made the subject of responsible action except after a very exhaustive inquiry. My hon. and learned friend referred to the suddenness with which this Bill has come on, and, owing to that, I am not in a position to say anything with regard to the action which the Government will take on the matter. I have personally very different views on the subject; but, under the circumstances, I think it is proper that I should not enter into any statement which would be merely a statement of my own personal views. The whole matter is well deserving of complete inquiry, but I am bound to say that I think it is a matter that should not be dealt with except as a whole. There are other matters with regard to County Courts which require consideration; and I have very great doubt as to the propriety of proceeding in the way this Bill proposes. I think the subject is one of grave importance, and that action should not be taken except upon some definite principle. There is no definite principle in fixing £100 instead of £50.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT: Or in fixing £50.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: I agree, but £50 being there I think before we alter it we ought to see on what principle we are to proceed. There is no more principle in one than in the other, but before we take action we ought to arrive at some definite principle. In these circumstances, I am not going to ask the House to vote against the Bill. I cannot, however, give the support of the Government, and I must reserve complete liberty of action as to its further stages.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District) said he was glad to have heard the Attorney General's sympathetic reply, but he could not quite agree with him that there was no basis of principle about fixing £100 as the maximum limit. If he rightly recollected, £100 was the limit up to which the High Court could remit an action on a contract to the County Courts; and in the discussions he had had with County Court judges and with barristers, who practised largely in the County Courts in South Wales, it had often been represented to him that the raising of the limit from £50 to £100 in the case of personal actions, to which the Bill referred, would be of advantage to all concerned. What was the present position? If a man owed him £50 he could sue him in the County Court. If a man owed him £75 on some contract he had to take his action to the district registrar, go through the form of issuing a writ in the High Court, and then take out a summons before the district registrar to have the action remitted to the County Court. Of course, there were advantages in going to the High Court, because it was quite possible that as a creditor for £75, he might obtain his judgment more quickly than by going to the County Court; but he was told that the general feeling of the trading community, at any rate in South Wales, was in favour of raising the limit from £50 to £100, in order to facilitate the decision of disputes, not of a very large character, and the collection of debts of not very great amount. He therefore thought the Attorney General, when he came to consider the matter, would see that there was real ground for raising the limit from £50 to £100. He admitted that there must always be difficulty and hardship to some people by fixing a limit; but the real reason why many, who considered the question of extending the limit, fixed upon the £100 limit, was founded upon the practice in law in regard to the remission of actions from the High Court to the County Court. It was perfectly evident that if unlimited jurisdiction were conferred on the County Courts a very large alteration would have to be made in regard to the law of the County Courts, and in regard to the conditions of practice. He hoped the Attorney General would allow the Bill to go to a Second Reading, and he could then consider whether Amendments were required in order to make it a good and practicable measure.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) said the Bill proposed a reform in a direction which he himself had advocated for many years. He understood that the Attorney General had not been able to ascertain the opinion of the Government on the measure; and he did not think that the House would expect the hon. and learned Gentleman to express a definite opinion on it unless he had had a full opportunity of considering it. The strong argument in favour of this or some other similar or more extended reform was that only in one respect was their jurisdiction limited to £50. In the administration of estates they dealt with amounts up to £100, and in Admiralty cases they dealt with considerably larger sums of money, and decided the most difficult questions that could arise. There seemed to him to be no conceivable reason why, in the ordinary case of the recovery of a private debt, which was after all only a simple contract, the jurisdiction should be limited to £50. The administration of justice in Scotland had been alluded to as an analogy, but the sheriffs of Scotland, who stood in exactly the same position as the County Court judge in this country, and who, by the way, received only about half the salary, had unlimited jurisdiction. There was no doubt the administration of justice in Scotland was exercised extremely well, and no one had ever heard one word of complaint with regard to the way in which justice was administered in that country. This was a small reform. All that was desired was that the jurisdiction should be extended from £50 to £100. He, in fact, was astonished at the moderation of the mover of the Bill in asking for so little. He himself would have asked for a great deal more.

Then came the case of analogous changes which would no doubt have to be made if there was extended jurisdiction. If there was any desire to make other changes in the Bill they might be made with the consent of Parliament, and thus make the measure more valuable. If that were so, and if that Bill was allowed a Second Reading, and was referred to the Grand Committee on Law, there might be an instruction to the Committee to widen the scope of the measure to effect some desirable changes in the practice of the County Courts.

*MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) said although this Bill did not apply to Ireland, everybody knew that if it was carried for England, in a very short time similar legislation would be initiated for the sister country. He had had considerable experience of the working of the County Court system of Ireland, and after much anxious consideration he was of opinion that this Bill ought to be allowed a Second Reading. Its only fault was that it did not go far enough. He could never understand why there should be any limitation to the jurisdiction. The County Court judges in either England or Ireland, and he believed in Scotland as well, were men of considerable experience in their profession, and he saw no reason, if they were competent to decide questions involving sums of £50 and £100, why they should not be entitled to adjudicate when much larger matters were in dispute. His idea was that every suitor should have the option of going to the County Court in the first instance, there should be no limit of jurisdiction as to amount, and it should be the right of the defendant to apply in a proper case to have the matter transferred to a higher Court. That was absolutely the converse of what at present existed.

That would meet all cases and be of great public benefit, because at the present time many persons who had rights to assert were deterred from coming forward to assert those rights on account of the expense. He hoped the Bill would be read a second time. He would extend the power of appeal so as to prevent injustice being done, and if that were achieved he had no doubt that the course of justice would be greatly advanced by giving every citizen a right to go to a cheap Court to assert his rights.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) said he had heard with pleasure that the hon. and learned Attorney General had no intention to oppose this Bill. It was a matter of great urgency to the public who wanted cheap and rapid justice. He rose to support the appeal made to the hon. and learned Attorney General that this Bill should be referred to the Grand Committee with the instruction suggested.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT said he accepted the suggestion of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, and with the hope that the Government would consent to the Bill going to the Grand Committee, he begged to move that this Bill be referred to the Grand Committee on Law, and that it be an instruction to that Committee, if it thinks fit, to extend the scope of the Bill so as to not only extend the jurisdiction, but amend the practice of the County Courts.

*MR. SPEAKER: The instruction cannot be moved without notice.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT: Then, Sir, I simply move that the Bill be referred to the Grand Committee on Law.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law.

SOLICITORS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT: I am conscious I am going to introduce a Bill dealing with a difficult and delicate question, but I introduce it on the authority and responsibility of the Incorporated Law Society. I am glad I can say to the learned Attorney General that this Bill has already passed in another place, having been moved, I think, by Lord Macnaghten, and supported by the Lord Chief Justice and the Master of the Rolls—eminent legal authorities. The question of defaulting solicitors has, unfortunately, been too often before the public and before the House; and, while every member of that honourable profession must regret that such is the case, they must also concur in the demand made, both by the public and in this House, that they should do their best to prevent occurrences which are injurious and wrong from every point of view. And, that being so, I shall ask the House not to refuse the means to enable them to carry out what I believe is a general and most proper feeling on the part of the public. I may say at once that statutory powers for these purposes have been given by Parliament to the Incorporated Law

Society as the registrar of solicitors, and that they have exercised those powers, not only with great responsibility both to the public and to the profession, but, I believe, with great judgment and discretion, and certainly with an honest and honourable desire to do what is right amid many conflicting interests. I have not the honour to be a member of that Committee, and therefore I say, with the certainty of conviction, that in my opinion, these statutory duties are well and properly performed, and certainly with an honest desire to fulfil the requirements of Parliament and of the public. It was the former practice of the Society—as the registrar of solicitors—not to renew the practising certificate of a solicitor who had, possibly owing to misfortune, become bankrupt. But under the authority of a case tried in the Divisional Courts some years ago, the Society exercised discretion in the matter—and exercised it honestly and properly. However, more recently the matter was taken to the Court of Appeal, which held that there was in law no such discretion, and, therefore, whatever the circumstances of the bankruptcy of a solicitor, there was compulsion on the part of the Society to renew the practising certificate. The former practice worked well, and I know of no case of hardship arising under it. I think the House will agree that there are many cases in which it is most desirable that that discretion should be exercised. A bankruptcy may often be a misfortune, and when it is so it is greatly to be regretted. But this Bill applies only to undischarged bankrupts, and though there may be cases of undischarged bankrupts which have been equally caused by misfortunes, the discharge is not refused by the Bankruptcy Court. It is quite true that the discharge may be postponed for two years where the minimum dividend of 10s. in the £ has not been paid, and that is a provision in the Bankruptcy Act of 1890 which I myself introduced into this House.

Again, there is discretion in the Bankruptcy Court to refuse the discharge if the bankrupt is held to be responsible for the occurrence of the bankruptcy. I think I may say that an undischarged bankrupt may be in that position owing to a possible miscarriage of justice, but the immense probability is that his position is due to circumstances over which he had control. However, I think the House will agree with me that when there has been anything criminal or objectionable from an honourable standpoint, and even when there has been, perhaps, though I urge this point less strongly, a mere want of means in carrying on a profession which demands some means, and without which means there may be temptations, I say I think the House will agree that a Committee with statutory powers and responsibilities, inquiring into these circumstances may well, in addition to other statutory powers, be vested with the discretion of refusing to renew the certificates. If the Committee should exercise an unwise or improper discretion, there is provided an appeal to the Master of the Rolls. And here I may say that the Master of the Rolls approved this Bill when it passed in another place. Under these circumstances, I think the House will say that unless there is some strong ground for the belief—which I hope is not the case—that these powers have ever been administered harshly or improperly, a discretion under such circumstances in the case of undischarged bankrupts—a discretion protected by a right of appeal to the Master of the Rolls—may well be entrusted to the Society.

The only other provision in the Bill is

that the Society shall have access to the file of the Bankruptcy Court, so that it may be informed of the whole circumstances of the case. To this there can be no objection. This Bill, I find, applies to Ireland, and I can only say to hon. Members from that country that if they prefer that Ireland shall be dealt with separately in this matter I am quite willing to undertake not to proceed with that part of the Bill. Although I am in favour of uniform legislation, and believe that that is the proper line in dealing with these questions, still if hon. Members object to the inclusion of Ireland, I am content to leave the matter in their hands, and will not persist in pressing that provision. I beg to move the Second Reading of this Bill with a full sense of responsibility and with a strong belief that it is a proper one and that the powers proposed to be granted will be properly exercised.

Motion made, and Question proposed—"That this Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Albert Rollit.*)

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) said he regretted that if the Motion for the Second Reading of this Bill were pressed to a division it would be his duty to vote against it, because it seemed to be quite unnecessary for all reasonable purposes. It proposed to make the lot of certain solicitors unduly severe. The proposition of the hon. Baronet amounted to this—that they were to invest the Incorporated Law Society and the judges with absolute discretion, and with the power of making something a crime which might not be a crime at present. Bankruptcy was no crime, and to make it a crime seemed to him to be the main effect and intention of the promoters of the Bill. The proposal was that any solicitor applying for a renewal of his certificate should, if he were an undischarged bankrupt, be liable to have it suspended by the Incorporated Law Society. Now it was suggested that an undischarged bankrupt was different to a man who had obtained his discharge in bankruptcy, and that he ought, therefore, to be treated differently and more severely. But the fact that he was an undischarged bankrupt might be as much a misfortune as the fact that he was a bankrupt at all; and if it was the case that his failure to obtain his discharge was owing to no misfortune of his own, but was a pure misfortune, it seemed an extraordinary proposal that that class of bankrupt should be selected from among other men for especially severe punishment, and that he should be deprived of the means of earning his livelihood for ever afterwards. That surely was a proposal which would not commend itself to men of common sense, and he failed to understand why it was made at all. If a man had been guilty of some disgraceful act in the exercise of his profession, the present law provided ample means for the punishment of such an offence. He imagined that the Incorporated Law Society after the conviction of such a man, after even the public exposure of such a man without conviction, would have no difficulty whatever in applying to the Court, and in doing so successfully, in order to have him struck off the rolls. As a matter of fact that was what happened every day.

Fortunately in Ireland they were not troubled with those matters so much as they were in England, and any person who had read the English newspapers, particularly the London newspapers, could not fail to be struck with the fact that there had been an abnormal number—even taking into account the large number of solicitors—of the members of the profession who had been proved guilty of misconduct. Therefore, he was not surprised that some such proposal as this should have been made. But in Ireland they were in a better position. Nothing like the same number of such cases had occurred there, so that so far as Ireland was concerned there was no reason for the application of so severe a remedy. But what was to be said of the further proposal that the Incorporated Law Society, composed of persons of the same profession, should be constituted a tribunal to investigate the conduct of their fellows, invested with the power of deciding, apparently without evidence and in the absence of the parties, questions which might deprive members of the profession of the means of earning their bread in the country of their birth? He would not invest any body of men with such a power, while, if there was any body which less than another should be entrusted with such a power, it was surely the Incorporated Law Society. That body should be the first to call to its aid, in the work of purifying the profession, some outside body which could not be accused of being influenced by motives of professional jealousy. The Bill gave an appeal to the Master of the Rolls in England and the Lord Chancellor in Ireland, who, also, he believed, might sit *in camera.* No judge ought, and he did not believe that men like the present occupants of the offices referred to would like, to be entrusted with such a power. There was no reason for the Bill; it would inflict unnecessary hardship and be contrary to the recognised principles of jurisprudence; and on these grounds he moved that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Clancy.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid) rose to continue the debate, when—

MR. JOYCE (Limerick) called attention to the fact that less than forty Members were present.

The House having been counted—

*MR. SPEAKER: There being less than forty Members present, the sitting will be suspended until four o'clock, unless in the meantime a quorum is formed, in which case business will proceed. If no quorum be formed, the House will be adjourned at four o'clock.

(Sitting suspended.)

At Four o'clock, sixteen Members only being present, the House was adjourned by Mr. Speaker without Question first put, till Monday next.

Adjourned at Four o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 2nd March, 1903.

EARL POULETT.

Petition of William Tournour Thomas Poulett for leave to lodge his printed case, notwithstanding that the time limited by Standing Order No. LXXXVI. has expired; read, and ordered as prayed.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

BRADFORD CORPORATION BILL [H.L].

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord AVEBURY: I should be glad if my noble friend could postpone the Second Reading of this Bill. I have been asked to oppose it, but have only just received the Papers.

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES (The Earl of Morley): If it would meet the convenience of the noble Lord I could put the Bill off till to-morrow; but I would point out to him the extreme desirability of getting on with these Bills as soon as possible.

Second Reading postponed accordingly.

RICKMANSWORTH GAS BILL [H.L.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord AVEBURY: Will the noble Earl also postpone this Bill?

The Earl of MORLEY: Yes, till to-morrow.

Second Reading postponed accordingly.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—

Dewsbury, Batley, and Birstall Tramways.

Romford and District Tramways.

Hamilton, Motherwell, and Wishaw Tramways.

And the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with:—

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements).

Wakefield and District Tramways.

Gosport, Fareham, and Cosham Tramways.

And that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—

Wellington (Salop) Gas [H.L.]

Exeter Railway [H.L.]

South Wales Mineral Railway [H.L.]

South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway [H.L.]

Nantwich Gas [H.L.]

Cardiff Railway [H.L.]

Faversham Gas [H.L.]

Bournemouth Gas and Water [H.L.]

British Gas Light Company (Norwich) [H.L.]

Chatham and District Light Railways [H.L.]

Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power [H.L.]

Didcot, Newbury, and Southampton Railway [H.L.]

Dudley, Stourbridge and District Tramways [H.L.]

Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) [H.L.]

Western Trust [H.L.]

Barry Railway [H.L.]

Hexham Gas [H.L.]

London, Brighton and South Coast Railway [H.L.]

Wirral Railway [H.L.]

South Lancashire Tramways [H.L.]

Hastings Tramways (Extensions) [H.L.]

Pelican and British Empire Life Office [H.L.]

Plymouth and Stonehouse Gas [H.L.]

Poole and District Electric Traction [H.L.]

Port Talbot Railway and Docks [H.L.]

Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage [H.L.]

South-Eastern and London, Chatham and Dover Railways [H.L.]

Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal [H.L.]

And that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—

Derby Gas [H.L.]

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Antrim, Down, Armagh, and Belfast Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Aston Manor Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Belfast Water Bill [H.L.]; Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bury and District Joint Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity Bill [H.L.], Frinton-on-Sea Sea Defences Bill [H.L.]; Harrogate Water Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Mersey Docks and

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Nantwich Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.]; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Oldham Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Pontypridd Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.]; Salford Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Scunthorpe Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Shropshire, Worcestershire, and East Denbighshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Southampton Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Sutton Coldfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Torquay Corporation Water Bill [H.L.]; Willesden Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Worthing Corporation (Tramways) Bill [H.L.], read 2ª.

Scottish American Mortgage Company Bill [H.L.]. Presented; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY (ESTIMATES) (1903–1904).

Explanatory statement by First Lord of the Admiralty.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 2940. Argentine Republic (Finances 1901 and 1902).

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Northern Division of Scotland, for the year 1902.

COLONIES (ANNUAL).

No. 382. Trinidad and Tobago: Report for 1901–1902.

ARMY (IMPERIAL YEOMANRY).

Training Return of Imperial Yeomanry for 1902.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

NATAL.

The Northern Districts Annexation Act, 1902.

POST OFFICE.

Statutory Rules and Orders, 1903—

No. 111. The Telegraph (Foreign-Written Anglo-Danish Press Telegram) Regulations, 1903, dated 9th February, 1903.

No. 112. The Telegraph (Foreign-Written Anglo-Norwegian Anglo-Swedish Press Telegram) Regulations, 1903, dated 9th February, 1903.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (PROVISIONAL ORDERS) (SESSION 1903).

Report by the Board of Trade, of their proceedings under the General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, and the General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, Amendment Act, 1862.

COMMITTALS (IRELAND).

Returns, from the Clerks of the Crown and Peace, of the number of persons committed for trial in 1902.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

AUGMENTATION OF BENEFICES ACT, 1863.

Return of proceedings, under the Lord Chancellor's Augmentation Act, from 28th January, 1902 to 28th February 1903.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No 7.)

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS AND PUBLIC TENDER.

*EARL GREY: My Lords, I beg to ask His Majesty's Government whether it is not the practice of the India Office to place all freights by public tender, and if the same practice is followed by the other Departments of His Majesty's Government.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of HARDWICKE): My Lords, as far as the India Office is concerned, I may state generally that all freights of importance are advertised. The Admiralty is the only other Government Department concerned. All engagements for freights of Arms or Navy stores are made through the Admiralty shipping agents, Messrs. Hogg and Robinson, who are given a free hand as to the method of engagement, and who advertise their requirements at their office, 101 Leadenhall-street, and at the Shipping Exchange. This plan was adopted more than thirty years ago because it was found that formal tenders at headquarters led to difficulty and delay, as most of the shipments of Army and Navy stores which are destined for many ports are necessarily made in comparatively small consignments at frequent intervals in regularly-running ships. The practice has proved in every way satisfactory. The Crown Agents for the Colonies, whose shipments are very large, adopt a precisely similar plan.

*EARL GREY: My Lords, in moving for the Return which stands in my name on the Paper, I must ask the indulgence of the House while I make a few observations. From the statement which has just been made by the noble Lord it appears that while it is the general practice of the India Office to place all freight contracts by public tender the same practice does not obtain in respect of other Government freight contracts, which are only advertised in exceptional cases. Having looked very carefully into this question I have come to the conclusion that the practice of privately placing freight contracts for Government cargoes instead of placing them by public tender is most injurious to the public interest. I maintain, looking to South African experience, that the result of this practice has been, first of all, to impose an unnecessary burden upon the South African taxpayer; secondly, to increase the cost of living to the South African consumer; and, thirdly, which is the most important of all, to divert trade to Germany and America which would otherwise have remained in England. I should like to amend my Motion, so as to include Rhodesia, and if the Return is granted in that form, it will enable the House to compare the freight contracts of Rhodesia with those of other administrations in South Africa. In the case of Rhodesia the greatest trouble has been taken to secure fair contracts; and, owing to the strenuous efforts and business capacity of Mr. Jones, joint manager of the Chartered Company, the taxpayers of Rhodesia have paid a lower rate by at least 15s. per ton on Government goods and rails imported, as compared with taxpayers of the other British colonies in South Africa. But there are other and more important benefits that have been secured by the action of the Chartered Company. Not only have the Rhodesian taxpayers been relieved of an unnecessary tax, but the people themselves have shared the advantage of the low rates on all their imports. The power of placing Government cargoes, even to small amounts, is a powerful lever which can be used with great effect for the purpose of obtaining cheaper rates for ordinary merchants. If Rhodesia, with its comparatively small population of 15,000 whites, can, by the exercise of vigorous business methods, reduce the rates payable by the ordinary merchant on imported tonnage by a sum varying from 15s. to 45s. a ton, what are we to think of administrative methods which not only fail to secure fair freights for themselves, but support a system which imposes a charge of 10s. to £1 more than is necessary on all important tonnage.

It is well known that the German Government, in return for their steamship subsidies, secure the right to control freights, and they exercise that right in such a way as to secure favourable terms for the ordinary shipper in their subsidised steamers, which acts to the great disadvantage of British shipping. The patronage of Government cargoes operates in much the same way as the German subsidy—that is to say, shipowners, in order to obtain these Government freights, are ready to make concessions in the matter of the freights charged to ordinary merchants. Your Lordships will therefore readily realise that the larger the volume of freights handled by the Government Departments, the greater is the leverage they can use to induce shipowners to reduce their rates to the public generally. When I state that the tonnage imported into South Africa amounts to something over 4,000,000 a year it will at once be seen that we are dealing with a large matter, and one of vital importance to our South African fellow subjects; and I contend that if the Government Departments of this country and the various Governments in South Africa, had adopted the methods so successfully employed by the Chartered Company, a saving would have been effected of 10s., or at the least 5s., per ton, which, on 4,000,000 of tonnage, amounts to a sum considerably larger than the Transvaal has to pay as interest on its war contribution of £30,000,000. There is another consideration of even greater national importance. It is an elementary truism that the country which controls the trade routes of the world is at once the centre of monetary exchange and the seat of empire. Any action, therefore, which tends to divert a trade route from England to Germany and America is an act of the blackest disloyalty to the best interests of our country, and, having looked carefully into the whole subject, I not only deplore but condemn what I cannot describe by any less forcible term than the culpable inertia of our Government officials, which has been responsible for driving into Germany and America trade which ought to have remained in this country. Let me explain how the Conference lines have fought and often killed opposition by forfeiting the 10 per cent. rebates due to shippers who ship a single ton of cargo by non-Conference lines, and by charging them double rates on all future cargoes. By this device they have been able to keep for themselves the trade, and at their own rates, because British shippers naturally hesitate before they take any step, the effects of which would be to penalise them severely should they desire to ship their goods in the future by one of the Conference steamers. The English shippers who send their goods by the German lines on the East Coast are not thus terrorised, and thus a direct inducement is afforded to British shippers to use German ships for the South African trade. On freights from New York a different system is employed. To all shippers other than those who are already tied hand and foot to the Conference lines by the rebate system, they offer the advantage of a rate less than half the rates charged for the same class of goods from England, with the result that American manufacturers are supported and encouraged at the expense of our own employers and artizans. The Return I am asking for will show what support the Government have given to the competing lines. The interest of the South African taxpayer, the consumer, and British commerce, all demand that their opposition should be successful, and now that they have succeeded, through the support of the Chartered Company, and the people of Rhodesia, in compelling the Conference lines to reduce their rates to all South African ports, I trust His Majesty's Government will recognise their claim, other things being equal, to a fair share of the cargoes they control. I have to-day received a private communication from a firm of shipowners who for reasons which the House will appreciate do not wish their name to be made public, although I shall be glad to hand their communication to His Majesty's Government, in which they express the hope that the scope of the Return which I hope the House will grant, shall include cargoes sent to India and to all Crown Colonies. It appears that this firm, which, owing to the practice of the India Office in advertising for tenders has been able to secure continuous freight contracts of Government cargoes sent to India, has been unable to obtain a single freight contract of recent years to any of the Crown Colonies. This fact alone is sufficient to convince your Lordships of the importance of the enquiry I submit ought to be made, and I now have the honour to move for the Return.

Moved, "For a Return showing during the year 1902: (*a*) the total tonnage despatched by His Majesty's Government and the Governments of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony to South Africa; (*b*) the ports to which this tonnage was despatched, and the tonnages carried to each port; (*c*) the average freight paid for the various classes of goods despatched to each port; (*d*) the names of the shipping companies employed and the tonnage dealt with by each company; and for similar Returns, if possible, in regard to the tonnages shipped by the Governments of Cape Colony, Natal, and Rhodesia."—(*Earl Grey.*)

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords, this Return has often been asked for before, and it has been the subject of a Report from a Joint Committee of the directors of Army and Navy contracts, who held that it would be most undesirable that any departure should be made from the present practice of treating tenders for the Government freights as confidential. In view of the invariable refusal of this Return by different Governments, and the fact that its preparation would involve work scarcely commensurate with the object the noble Earl desires to attain, I cannot accede to the motion. These contracts are not entered into without very careful inquiry as to what competition there is in the market for freights. It is the practice of the broker of the Government to go into the freight market and announce what freight he has to send and to what port, and then to invite competition on the part of those who ship to the port. The noble Earl has claimed for the Rhodesian Company, of which he is a distinguished ornament, that it has succeeded not only in getting very low rates for the conveyance of the company's freight, but also low rates for the public. I desire to congratulate the noble Earl on the success which has attended the efforts of the agents of the British South Africa Company, and to assure him that, so far as the Governments of the Transvaal and of the Orange River Colony are concerned—and I include the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who is responsible to Parliament for these Governments—the intention is that the freight contracts shall not be arranged solely on the basis of what is cheapest for the Colonial Governments themselves, but also in the interests of the public who are shippers to South Africa. The Government are in negotiation both with the opposition and with the Conference lines. Every opportunity has been given to them respectively to offer to the Government and the people of South Africa the most favourable terms. The whole question is under the careful consideration of the Colonial Office, and I hope will be settled in a very short time. I do not think it would be possible to interfere with the discretion of the shipping companies as to rebates. The opposition line for which the noble Earl claims consideration on behalf of the Government also runs from America to South Africa. A circular letter addressed by one of its agents to merchants in New York says—

> "In entering on African trade this line begs to assure you that it will at all times make rates that will enable the American manufacturers to compete with those of Europe."

In the face of a circular of that kind any claim for that company on the ground of special patriotism may be allowed to stand aside. But the Government will be guided by considerations of what is best and cheapest both for the Government and for the public—the merchants as well as the people of South Africa—in placing the large amount of freights that will shortly be at their disposal. During the present year they may not amount to more than 60,000 or 70,000 tons for the Transvaal and Orange River Colony; but as soon as the Transvaal loan has been successfully floated, the proceeds will be applied to the purchase of large quantities of material for railway lines and rolling stock for South Africa, and the Government will take care to give their patronage only to those lines which will carry their freight at reasonable rates and give reasonable rates to the public as well.

*EARL GREY: Do I understand the noble Earl to say that the freight offers will in future be posted so as to be open to the inspection of shipowners?

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: I did not say anything about their being posted. What I said was that they were entrusted to the Government broker, and that he went round to the representatives of the shipowners and invited tenders from them in competition. That is the practice which has been observed in the past and which will be followed in the future.

*EARL GREY: The practice of the Government broker going round to selected shipowners does not lead to free and open competition. The India Office freight offers are posted.

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: I am afraid I cannot undertake that the Colonial Office will follow the practice of any other office.

*EARL GREY: I regard the answer of the noble Earl as so unsatisfactory that I must put the House to the trouble of dividing.

EARL SPENCER: I doubt whether it is desirable that your Lordships should divide on the subject this evening. I do not want to take part one way or the other, but I think a *prima facie* case has been made out for the Return. Possibly time will be taken by the Government for reconsideration.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (The Earl of SELBORNE): The objection to the granting of the Return is not on the score of the labour it would involve. In the opinion of the Government it would be against the interest of the public if these Returns were made. The Transport Department of the Admiralty, as to the efficiency of which all are agreed, have stated most distinctly that in their opinion it would be against the public interest to make these Returns, and that the consequence of making them would be that the public would get worse terms in the future than they have got in the past.

On Question, Motion negatived.

VENEZUELA.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, I rise to call attention to the contents of the Blue-book lately published on Venezuela [Venezuela, No. 1, 1903] and to move for further Papers. I, make no apology for bringing this subject before your Lordships to-night, for I am but taking up the challenge thrown out by the noble Duke on the first day of the session, and doing so under the very conditions which he laid down. The House will remember that on the first day of the session the noble Duke deprecated very strongly any discussion taking place on the Address on the subject of Venezuela. He said, with the most perfect truth, that it was impossible that your Lordships could have mastered the contents of the Blue-book, which was only placed on the Table of the House on that day, and he added that it was desirable that you should have done so before you attempted to discuss the question. He also said he thought it would be best that the discussion should be postponed till the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was in a position to make a complete statement with regard to the subject. Well, my Lords, I think that now, after nearly a fortnight has elapsed, those conditions have been fulfilled, and that both the House and the Foreign Office should be in a position to deal with this subject with full and ample knowledge. I must confess that I was filled somewhat with dismay at the chilly way in which the noble Duke received the congratulations of my noble friend beside me on the prospects of a settlement of the Venezuelan question. My noble friend Lord Spencer congratulated the House the other night that, if I may use words that have now become a classic phrase, "we had muddled through," or in some other way got through the Venezuelan mess, and had come out on top. The noble Duke protested against any such idea. He said that no settlement had yet been arrived at, that we had only made one short step on the road to settlement, and that the whole subject was still full of difficulties, doubts, and possible dangers. "So," said the noble Duke, "I cannot accept your congratulations."

I am inclined to agree with the noble Duke that there is absolutely no cause for congratulation with regard to this matter. It seems to me to have been a sorry enterprise with very inadequate results. Here you have two of the greatest Powers in Europe setting out to collect debts by force from a miserable bankrupt South American Republic, torn with civil dissensions. You seize the fleet of that Republic, you sink two of its ships, you bombard its forts, for two months you blockade its coast line, and at the end of that you get a miserable fraction of the claims you have made, and Great Britain gets but a miserable fraction of that fraction—I think about one-fourteenth of what is given over—and the rest of your claims are referred to two different courts of arbitration, which at the present moment are by no means clear or explicit. Then you have the Leader of the House coming down and telling us that the horizon is full of clouds of doubt and difficulty, and that a settlement is still far off. That certainly is not a subject for congratulation, and I think that throughout the whole of the affair the only subject for congratulation is that apparently we have the good fortune in America to have a representative who, for tact and judgment, seems likely to follow in the footsteps of that great public servant and diplomatist, the late Lord Pauncefote. At any rate, we can all join in congratulating Sir Michael Herbert on the recognition that his Sovereign has made of his ability. This question, I think, may be looked at from three different points of view. There is the point of view of Great Britain, of British claims and of British interests; there is the point of view of joint action between Great Britain and Germany; and there is the point of view of the United States of America and of our relations with that great Republic. I maintain that, from which ever point of view you look upon it, the policy of the Government has been unusual, ill-considered, rash, and likely to lead to misunderstanding and difficulty, if not danger. Let me take up those three different points of view *seriatim*. My first complaint is the utterly inadequate statement of British claims that has been given to the country. We have not the slightest idea what the amount of those claims are, and to whom they are to be paid. The only statement of the British claims that we have is best stated in the despatch of Lord Lansdowne to Mr. Buchanan on page 149 of the Blue-book. The noble Marquess writes—

> "The British claims, as Count Metternich presumed, were capable of classification. Those on account of the recent cases of unjustifiable interference with the liberty and property of British subjects, including the shipping claims, would rank first. Claims for injury to British property during the late revolution, and that which placed President Castro in power, would come next; and in the third place the claims of the bondholders."

The despatch goes on—

> "His Majesty's Government did not, however, desire, in their demands upon Venezuela, to draw a distinction between the various categories. Their object was to obtain a general settlement, and they were of opinion that to advance one class of claims, or at this stage to specify any particular amount, would diminish the chance of securing, in all cases, the reparation which they considered to be justly due."

Surely in that vanishes the theory that the bondholders are not benefited by the action of the Government. We have heard it stated again and again that the bondholders were not included in the view of His Majesty's Government.

Now, what are these bondholders? In the next despatch the noble Marquess the Foreign Secretary goes into the question of the representations of the Disconto Gesellschaft, and categorically says that a settlement of these claims was part of the arrangement which His Majesty's Government were prepared to support. Let us see the sort of business which this Disconto Gesellschaft transacted with Venezuela. The last loan advanced by the Disconto Gesellschaft, which is essentially a German company, was in 1896. It then underbid all the other French and English houses and offered to advance to Venezuela fifty million francs at five per cent. interest, and paid to the Venezuelan Government eighty francs for every hundred francs of nominal value. On that offer they obtained the loan. I am also informed that at that time the English and French houses would only do business at twenty or thirty per cent. interest, allowing sixty francs for every hundred of nominal value. The business of the bondholders is very much like that of ordinary money-lenders, and it seems to me that people who embark in commercial enterprises with, or lend money to, a country like Venezuela should do so on their own responsibility. It is a pure gamble, and the people who go into it take that into consideration when they make offers for such loans. I maintain that what are included in the second and third rank claims of the British Government are claims which certainly do not warrant any resort to force whatever, and really do not warrant anything very strong even in the way of representation. Then I come to the first-class claims, which I frankly admit are of a totally different nature. They may be grouped under three heads (1) maltreatment and arrest of British subjects; (2) detention, and, I think, in one case, destruction of a British vessel; and (3) violation of British territory. These, of course, are serious offences, and the first hundred pages or so of the Blue-book set out clearly the details, but I think that anybody who carefully reads through those pages will admit that at any rate there is, in some cases, a presumption that there is something to be said on the Venezuelan side, and that there may be some ground in some of these cases for the charge that the injured persons were or had been carrying on smuggling operations or had been engaged in the illicit introduction of arms into the territory of Venezuela. Indeed, in the summary of the statement of cases contained in this Blue book I find suggestions of this very fact, and the temptations to smuggling in Venezuela are no doubt very great. In that country there is a very high tariff, and, as we have been told, there have been a succession of revolutions.

I would remind the House that one of the Articles of the Constitution of the Venezuelan Republic lays down that a Venezuelan subject is not liable to any penalty for bearing arms against the Venezuelan State, supposing it can be shown that that act is due to political motive. That seems to me to be a very strong encouragement to the use of arms within the Republic, and to the introduction of arms from without. I myself was in Trinidad not very long ago, and remember being told that this smuggling and illicit introduction of arms was very frequent from Trinidad, and, still more, from the Dutch Island of Curaçoa. Another point with regard to these claims. I want to know whether you can apply to them the sort of test that the Germans apply to their first-class claims. In Despatch No. 153 on page 155 of the Blue-book it is stated—

> "The Imperial Government, however, attach importance to the following point, viz., that the German War claims, under paragraph (a), which has already been thoroughly investigated, and has been presented to the Venezuelan Government for the amounts declared, shall not be subjected to fresh examination at the hands of this Commission."

Now, my Lords, the Germans say that the reason they desire their first-class claims to be excluded from any question of arbitration is that they have already been thoroughly investigated. Can it fairly be said that anything like the same amount of investigation has been applied to the British first-class claims? I venture to think not, and indeed there is absolute proof of that fact within the pages of the Blue-book. These offences were of recent origin. They began in the year 1901 and lasted to the end of June, 1902, and a curious fact is that the noble Marquess himself on November 26th of that year put the sum of £10,000, as the probable valued amount of these claims, and yet two months later is willing to take £5,500 in full discharge of them. That certainly seems to me to give a strong *prima facie* case for the opinion that these claims had not been fully investigated, and that no proper value had been fixed on them. Then there is the question of the violation of British territory. That arose in connection with the small island of Patos. We claim that island. It is an island without houses on it, and where, apparently, you can get neither water, food, nor shelter. The Venezuelans also claim it, and one case of violation of British territory which is set down against Venezuela is that a Venezuelan gunboat seized a Venezuelan boat for smuggling within the waters of this island. We ought to have been given more information as to our claim in this connection.

Leaving the British claims, which have certainly not been sufficiently examined, though in their nature they were of sufficient importance to justify the use of force, although I do not admit that they were of a nature to justify co-operation with another European Power in obtaining redress by force, I come to the question of our co-operation with Germany. Here we were combining with a Power—a friendly Power, a great European Power, a kindred Power—whose claims were totally different from our claims, whose methods were different from our methods, whose idea of policy was different from our idea of policy, and whose ulterior objects with regard to that part of the world were different from ours. Take the German claims. In Despatch No. 136 on page 146, it is stated that—

> "The German Government recognised that there was a sharp distinction between the character of the British and German first-line claims."

And so, indeed, there was. Ours were for offences against the person, against British ships and against British territory. Their first-class claims arose out of the Venezuelan civil war in 1898–1900, amounting approximately to 1,700,000 bolivares, and they are similar to the English second-class claims. Again, I would point out that Germany, differing from us in that respect, is most careful to state in each class of claims the total amount of their value. I think I may fairly contend that the difference between the British and German claims is marked indeed, and I may claim the assent of the noble Marquess himself to that by taking the words of his own despatch. But then, my Lords, there is the question of method, which I need not go into very deeply. I would only quote the destruction of the two Venezuelan gunboats and the bombardment of St. Carlos as showing the extreme difference of method between the action of the two countries.

Now I come to the question of the policy of the two countries. The noble Duke opposite and the Prime Minister alike have explicitly accepted the Monroe Doctrine. Germany has never accepted such a doctrine. I make no complaint of that. It is perfectly open for Germany to think that America has no right to keep a sort of hold on the South American Continent and to allow no European nation to acquire territory within it. But the basis of the policy is totally different, and we know perfectly well that recently Germany has had her ships of war cruising round the northern coasts of South America, and that they have been making surveys of that part of the sea and coast on behalf of their Government. I do not know what the truth of the matter is—perhaps the noble Marquess can tell us—but, at any rate, the report is very current in the United States of America that with regard to these very claims the German Government within the last few months offered to pay all the claims of German subjects against Venezuela and cancel all the obligations of that Government to Germany and German subjects, provided the President of Venezuela would grant them permission to occupy the Island of Margarita as a naval station. That is a sufficient proof of the difference between the object of this country and that of Germany, and yet, there being all that difference of method and of policy, we have our Government entering into a compact with Germany on these lines (I am quoting from Despatch No. 136), viz:—

> "As to the joint execution of measures of coercion, the German Government recognised that there was a sharp distinction between the character of the British and German "first-line" claims; nevertheless, the two claims ought to stand or fall together, and we ought to exclude the possibility of a settlement between Venezuela and one of the two Powers without an equally satisfactory settlement in the case of the other. Each Government ought, therefore, to come to an understanding before it embarked upon a project of coercion that neither Government should be at liberty to recede except by mutual agreement; and before common action was initiated, we ought to come to a distinct agreement to this effect. I told Count Metternich that it seemed to me only reasonable that if we agreed to act together in applying coercion, we should also agree that each should support the other's demands, and should not desist from doing so except by agreement."

Later on in these despatches you will find that the blockading Powers are to continue their co-operation before the Hague Tribunal. It does seem to me that it was a rash and ill-advised action to bind ourselves with a Power differing so much from us in aim and object, not only to the danger of our relations with the United States of America, but even of our understanding with the German Empire itself on account of the likelihood of differences of opinion arising in the execution of this contract.

Let me come to the position of this country with regard to America. It is the policy of all parties in this country to be on the best possible terms with the great English-speaking race on the other side of the Atlantic, and surely it was liable to cause misconception on the part of the United States of America when they find England co-operating in this way with Germany in that part of the world. Suspicion must have been heightened by the fact that you never took the trouble to tell the United States of America that you were going to enter into this course of action. The fact comes out as clear as daylight from these Papers. We were told by Lord Cranborne the other day in the House of Commons that the Government were aware, as far back as the beginning of 1902, that they were contemplating the necessity of adopting measures of coercion against Venezuela. On July 23rd, 1902, (Despatch No. 109), the noble Marquess, the Foreign Secretary, states—

> "The German Ambassador spoke to me to-day about the state of affairs in Venezuela. I told His Excellency that we had various causes of complaint against the Venezuelan Government, and that we intended to obtain satisfaction for the claims of British subjects. We should be quite ready to confer with the German Government with a view to joint action."

Then, on August 8th, we find the Foreign Office asking the advice of the Admiralty with regard to operations to be taken in these waters, and on August 14th, we have the answer of the Admiralty, in which it was pointed out that the time of year was not suitable to operations in South American waters, and that the month of November was the earliest time that a blockade should begin. Then the despatch from the Admiralty to the Foreign Office winds up—

> "Should His Majesty's Government as a matter of policy consider it desirable to adopt the suggestion of the German Ambassador, that the two Powers concerned should take part in a joint naval demonstration, their Lordships consider that a blockade in Venezuelan waters would be the best method of giving effect to it."

There you have, in the months of July and August, conferences going on as to whether there should be a blockade or not, the method of the blockade, and the agreement with Germany to co-operate in it, yet not one word appears in this Blue-book to show that the United States Government knew anything about it till November 11th, when the noble Marquess wrote to Sir Michael Herbert announcing the fact and requesting him to tell Mr. Hay. On November 13th, you have the answer of Mr. Hay acknowledging the communication, and saying that the United States Government, although they regretted that European Powers should use force against Central American countries, could not object to their taking steps to obtain redress for injuries suffered by their subjects, and so forth. That does seem to me to show a strange want of consideration of the susceptibilities of the American people. I should like to have a little more information on the subject. The case I have been putting is the case as it appears from the Blue-book, but when I take the statements of various Ministers I am at a loss to make these utterances correspond. On February 7th, Lord George Hamilton stated that in July last we took steps to ascertain that the measures proposed by us would in no way alienate the good feeling of the American Government and the American people. On February 13th, at Liverpool, the Prime Minister stated that the Government of the United States had been from the beginning taken into our confidence with regard to every stage of the proceedings; and on February 19, in the House of Commons, Lord Cranborne said that no formal intimation was made to the American Government in regard to the co-operation of the two Powers,† but that each of them had at different times informed the American Government that they might be compelled to resort to coercive measures against Venezuela. If Lord George Hamilton and Mr. A. J. Balfour are correct in what they stated, I want to know why we have not got the text of the communications that passed between His Majesty's Government and the Government of the United States before November 11th. On the other hand, if I am to accept the statement of the Under Secretary as correct, that again is contrary both to the Blue-book and to the statements of the two Ministers I have mentioned, because he represents that the British Government and the German Government each said that they were going to do something or other in Venezuela, but did not say they were going to co-operate together. It shows very little confidence in the Government of a great friendly Power not to tell them what you proposed to do in the matter. I should like some clear and full statement from the noble Marquess as to what exactly did take place in regard to communications between His Majesty's Government and the Government of the United States, and which of the three different stories is correct.

The noble Marquess may say that "after all it is very easy to criticise what we have done, but what better thing could have been done?" I am not afraid to suggest what I conceive would have been a better policy. It seems to me that when on July 23 the German Ambassador came to the noble Marquess and suggested this idea of co-operation, the noble Marquess might very well have said that it was not the intention or the habit of the British Government to co-operate with any European Power in American waters. That would have been a very natural and reasonable course to have taken. Or the noble Marquess might have taken a leaf out of the book of the noble Earl who sits below the Gangway. In 1895 Lord Rosebery had to deal with a state of affairs very similar to that which occurred in regard to Venezuela. I do not say that they were identical, but they were very similar. I refer to what was known as the Hatch incident in Nicaragua. I think that Mr. Hatch was in the British Consular Service, and that he and some British subjects were ill-treated and turned out of Nicaraguan territory. What did Lord Rosebery do on that occasion? He made communications to the American Government stating that he was going to bring force to bear on Nicaragua, and that he had no ulterior object whatever except to obtain redress for these particular injuries. Then their principal port Corinto was seized and held by us until redress was given for the outrages committed by the Nicaraguan Government, until, I think, the sum of 15,000 dollars was paid in compensation. That was a perfectly successful operation. Why was it successful? It was successful because the noble Earl acted alone, and, in the second place, because he made a complete communication of his intentions to the American Government. At that time I think there was a President in office who was disposed to press the Monroe Doctrine even more strongly than the present President is, and yet, so far as I am aware, throughout the whole of those proceedings in Nicaragua we never heard the words Monroe Doctrine at all.

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† See page 281.

The particular points on which I desire to press for further Papers are as follow. First, I ask that I should be given a full statement of all the British claims and their value, with the names of the persons on whose behalf they are made and to whom compensation is to be paid. Then I should like to have information as to the exact state of affairs with regard to the island of Patos, and a Paper giving the full return of the cost to this country of the blockade of the Venezuelan coast; and, lastly, I ask for Papers containing the communications, if any, which passed between us and the Government of the United States of America and which are not contained in this Blue-book. There is just one other small point with regard to these Papers to which I should like to refer. In this Blue-book are contained the whole of the Papers which were to be found in the White Paper of last session, presented just as the House was about to adjourn, and on which I think there was a statement from the noble Marquess in this House, and a short debate in the other House. It is rather curious that from that White Paper there were two despatches omitted which, I think, were very necessary to the proper understanding of the Venezuelan case at that time. The one is the despatch from the noble Marquess to Mr. Buchanan on November 26, 1902, from which two extracts are given in the Blue Book (Nos. 153 and 154) and the other the despatch or the memorandum communicated by M. Cambon on November 28, 1902, which was the caveat entered by the French with regard to the priority of claims. These were very important papers, and I cannot understand why they should have been omitted when papers were included up to December 2. It seems to me that the action of His Majesty's Government in regard to this question has been ill-considered and rash. I hope the noble Marquess can put a different complexion on their action, and I am sure nobody will be gladder if he can do so than we on this side of the House.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for further Papers relating to Venezuela."—(*The Lord Tweedmouth*).

*LORD AVEBURY: My Lords, I confess I am surprised at the attacks which have been made on His Majesty's Government with reference to the Venezuelan business. It is obvious from the Papers that have been published that the Government has exercised great patience and forbearance. If action had not been taken it is certain that neither the lives nor the property of British subjects would have been safe. I am, however, somewhat puzzled as to the distinction made between the various claims for the settlement of which the Government of Venezuela is equally responsible. The question whether foreign governments who have borrowed money in this country are to be permitted to break their obligations towards their creditors with impunity is one of great importance in view of the enormous sums of money which have been lent to them by British investors. Personally, I am not interested in the Venezuelan Debt, but am speaking as President of the Corporation of Foreign Bondholders, an institution which was founded in London some thirty years ago with the special object of protecting the interests of the holders of foreign bonds in this country. In illustration of the magnitude of the interests involved it may be mentioned that the Corporation has been instrumental in effecting settlements of debts aggregating in round numbers the gigantic sum of £1,000,000,000. Of course the bonds which represented this vast sum of money were not all held by British investors; far from it, but still the amount is enormous, and the subject of great importance.

Now, what are the reasons adduced against the Government for supporting the just rights of English investors? In the first place, it is sometimes said that the whole nation ought not to be put to expense for the benefit of a part. *A fortiori*, then, no individual Englishman is entitled to support or redress. Moreover, it must be remembered that the Government gets a substantial part of its revenue from income tax and stamps on foreign bonds. A foreign Government defaults and insists on a large reduction of its obligations. New bonds are then issued, and the interest in arrear is funded into the new securities, the value of which is probably greatly depreciated. The British Government, however, demands the payment of stamp duty on the par value of the new securities, and I am sorry to say that in many cases the funds to defray this charge come out of the pockets of the unfortunate bondholders instead of being provided by the defaulting Government. Surely those who contribute so largely to the revenue of this country are fairly entitled to receive support from their own Government. Another erroneous impression is that the rate of interest on most foreign loans is exorbitant, and that this is especially so in the case of the external debts of the Central and South American Republics. That was so formerly in some cases, but as matters now stand it will be found, on the contrary, that the rates of interest for which these States are are now liable is quite for reasonable. In the case of Venezuela, for instance, the interest on the 1881 Loan has only been paid (that is, during the time that Venezuela has not suspended payments altogether) at the rate of 3 per cent., while on the 1896 Loan the rate is 5 per cent., the average being less than 4 per cent. Costa Rica, some years ago, scaled down the rate to 2½ per cent. on three-fourths of her external debt and to 3 per cent. on the remainder, while Guatemala reduced her rate to 4 per cent. Not one of these three States, is, however, at the present time paying their external creditors anything at all. Colombia, who after a suspension of payments lasting for three and a half years has just announced the resumption of remittances, is only called upon to pay at the rate of 1½ per cent., rising to a maximum of 3 per cent. Nicaragua, Paraguay and Uruguay are, I am glad to say, honourably fulfilling their obligations, the rates of interest paid being in the case of Nicaragua 4 per cent., and of Paraguay 1½ per cent., rising to 3 per cent. respectively, whilst Uruguay pays 3½ per cent. on by far the greater part of its external debt, a small portion bearing 5 per cent. interest. I may confidently say that the bondholders are always ready to act reasonably and not demand more than any State can properly afford to pay without retarding its development, or crippling the hands of its Government. It is notorious also that a great many of the defaulting countries are in the habit of paying a high rate of interest on their internal debts, while the claims of their external creditors are treated with cynical indifference and their prior rights entirely disregarded.

Now is there any reason to suppose that the charge for interest imposes an unduly heavy burden; Let us compare the position of Venezuela with some other countries. In round figures the debt of France per head of the population is £29, and the proportion of revenue devoted to its service is approximately 34 per cent. In Italy the debt per head is £16, and the proportion of the revenue applied to its service is 33 per cent. Or let us take some South American countries. The debt per head of Uruguay amounts to more than £27, and 50 per cent. of the revenue is devoted to its service. In Argentina it may be reckoned that the Federal Debt per head is about £13, and that the proportion of revenue applied to debt service is not far short of 40 per cent. There are, of course, also many debts for which the Argentine Provinces are responsible which, if included, would increase these figures considerably. When we turn to Venezuela we find that the debt per head is only about £3 10s. The revenue of Venezuela in normal times amounts to about £2,000,000, while the sum required for interest and sinking fund on the external loans is a little over £200,000. It is clear, therefore, that there is no reason why Venezuela should not meet her engagements. It is not the wealth, but the will, that is wanting. If, however, it could be shown that some temporary reduction was imperative I am sure the creditors would give the position their careful consideration.

Has there, then, been in the case of Venezuela any action on the part of the creditors which could fairly detract from their rights or deprive them of sympathy? Quite the reverse. So far as the 1896 loan is concerned, the bonds were chiefly issued to railway and other companies for the settlement of guarantees which had been allowed by the

Government of Venezuela to get hopelessly in arrear, and for the redemption of these same guarantees in the future. The companies submitted to very heavy reductions of their claims; but before the bonds had been in their possession for two years, or thereabouts, Venezuela defaulted in the payment of the interest. As regards the English loan of 1881 I should have thought the Government of Venezuela would have regarded its payment as a sacred duty, inasmuch as this debt originated in money borrowed by Venezuela to win her independence. Venezuela has never, indeed, denied its responsibility, but, from experience in the past, I am afraid that this will not afford much consolation to those who have trusted her. During the sixty-nine years that have elapsed since Venezuela became an independent State it is reckoned that the external loans contracted in this country have been in default for nearly forty years, and that, during the same period, the Republic has compelled the bondholders to accept five separate arrangements, under each of which they have had to submit to large sacrifices of their rightful claims.

In the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards these defaulting States there seems to me to have hitherto been an extraordinary anomaly, and that is the distinction which is apparently drawn between an individual and a group of individuals. The idea seems to be that if the property of an individual is interfered with the whole power of England is to be employed to obtain redress, but if a number of persons are interfered with their rights and property may be arbitrarily taken away, and it is considered wrong to insist on reparation. I confess I see no logic or justice in this. Why, moreover, in the case of the Venezuelan negotiations has a discrimination been made between what are called the second and third-rank claims? In the prior rank there appear to be included the claims of certain industrial companies against the Venezuelan Government, whilst in the last rank is placed the external loan of 1896, which, as I have already said, was issued principally to pay off debts due from the Venezuelan Government on account of guarantees owing to railway companies and other industrial enterprises, amongst which were three English concerns. These companies, as I am informed; still hold the bonds they took in settlement of their claims, and it is very difficult to understand why the fact of their having accepted them should cause them to be relegated to an inferior category. Because these companies are now, as it were, merged in the general group of individuals known as the "bondholders"—instead of being confronted with the Venezuelan Government in an isolated and individual capacity, is surely no justification for drawing a distinction to the disadvantage of the former claimants.

It will be remembered that in certain countries where defaults have occurred International Debt Councils have been established, for instance, in Turkey, Greece, and Egypt. Why should not the same principle be extended to other defaulting States? There may be—in some cases, no doubt, there have been—circumstances which have rendered the payment of the full interest impossible. In the case of Turkey an assignment of certain revenues has been given, and these revenues are directly administered and collected by the representatives of the bondholders. This arrangement is honourable to all concerned, and it is the refusal on the part of Venezuela and other similar defaulting States to give any adequate guarantees that really is dishonourable.

I am not quite clear what are the precise intentions of His Majesty's Government in the Venezuela matter, but I sincerely hope that the question of the settlement of the external loans will be referred with other claims to the Hague Tribunal. Indeed, unless this is done it appears to me that the result of their action will have been to have put a large number of foreign creditors before our main English claims, and the English investors will be even worse off than they were before. It is to be hoped, also, that the United States Government will recognise that the Monroe claim involves a certain responsibility. The Central American States cannot expect to be protected from annexation unless they are prepared to fulfil their engagements. The flagrant repudiation of their responsibilities has long been a disgrace to several of the American Republics; it has seriously interfered with their own prosperity and has compromised and lowered the credit of neighbouring countries which, like Brazil and Chile, have faithfully fulfilled their obligations. We have now a great opportunity of terminating a state of things which has cost many millions to English investors, and has involved great loss to the defaulting countries themselves. If the settlement of the external debts of Venezuela is referred to the Hague Tribunal, I doubt not that the creditors would cheerfully accept any honourable and reasonable settlement of their just rights. If His Majesty's Government decide to adopt this course they would greatly benefit thousands of English investors who are now unjustly defrauded; they would at the same time benefit Venezuela herself; they would rescue her from her present degradation, and restore her to an honourable position among civilised nations.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, I was glad to notice that, in spite of the critical tone of the speech of the noble Lord opposite, he did not follow an example which has been set him in some quarters, by taking us to task for having co-operated with Germany, merely on the ground that under no circumstances should we be excusable if we took joint action with that Power. I have always felt that the idea of allowing our sensitiveness over incidents which took place during the South African war to influence our attitude to such an extent was greatly to be deprecated. I should have regretted any action on the part of His Majesty's Government which might have had the effect of increasing the estrangement produced between the two nations by the events to which I have just referred. The noble Lord told us, however, that we should have done better had we taken action alone, and he referred to the precedent of Nicaragua. There is this difference between the two cases—that, to the best of my belief, in the Nicaragua case no European Power invited us to co-operate with them. In this case we were approached by Germany; and I cannot help thinking that the noble Lord has not sufficiently taken into account the great practical inconvenience which would have resulted if Germany and Great Britain, having each of them made up their mind to resort to measures of coercion, had proceeded to those measures separately and without a previous understanding. A blockade is not a very simple or agreeable enterprise; but the troubles incident to a blockade would surely have been immensely increased if Great Britain and Germany had each of them undertaken separately and without previous understanding coercive operations against Venezuela. It is not difficult to imagine some of the results of such isolated action. I have the greatest respect and admiration for sailors; but it is pretty well known that they are not always very easy to hold in hand, and that the spirit of emulation prevails very strongly in their breasts. I ask your Lordships to consider what might have been the result if, when we were blockading Venezuelan ports or seizing Venezuelan gunboats, German ships of war had been simultaneously blockading the same ports and starting in pursuit of the same gunboats. I cannot help thinking that the results might not have been altogether edifying, except perhaps to the Venezuelans. The blockade took place under a prearranged scheme; each Power took its own sphere of operations; and the result was that, within a fortnight, the Venezuelan Government, who had turned a deaf ear to our remonstrances, proposed to us that our disputes should be settled by arbitration.

The main count of the noble Lord's indictment is, however, not so much that we associated ourselves with Germany in this enterprise, as that what I may call the Articles of Association between the British and the German Governments were carelessly and rashly drawn up. We are told, in particular, that we were guilty of grave imprudence when we agreed with the German Government that, once we had embarked upon measures of coercion neither Government was to be at liberty to recede without previous agreement with the other. That objection seems to me a strange one. I cannot conceive, either in private or in public life, that when two parties embark together upon a difficult and troublesome enterprise it should not be upon an honourable understanding that they are not to desert one another in the middle of it. I do not know what would be thought of the reputation of a private individual who in such circumstances deserted his associate. I am sure the reputation of a great Power which made terms for itself in the middle of an enterprise of this kind would not gain by such conduct. But the very fact that we were honourably bound to go through with this business rendered it, no doubt—and I freely admit it—necessary for us to consider carefully upon what terms the joint enterprise should be undertaken. The noble Lord has reviewed these terms and made various criticisms upon them. In the first place, he took the British claims and examined them clause by clause. He admitted that in principle the claims for outrages upon British shipping were claims which it was our duty to enforce; but he suggested that some of them were of a suspect character. All I can say, is that even supposing it could be shown that one of those unfortunate schooners had contraband goods on board, that was no justification for the abominable and outrageous treatment which the owners and crew of those vessels received at the hands of the Venezuelan authorities.

Then the noble Lord called attention to the fact that in the early stages of the correspondence we mentioned £10,000 as the value of the first rank claims, and that at a later stage we reduced that sum to £5,500, which in his view is a proof of the untrustworthiness and unsoundness of the whole of this class of claims. It was not very easy at first to check these claims and revise them. They were checked and revised by our Minister at Caracas; and the result was that, wishing not to ask for a shilling more than was strictly due to us, we asked for the smaller sum. The larger sum mentioned was asked for at a time when we were not yet in the full possession of the facts, and when it was necessary to mention an outside limit. Then the noble Lord suggested that all the other claims were virtually the claims of the bondholders; during the discussion on the Address the noble Earl opposite (Earl Spencer), saying something to the same effect, told us he could understand pressing for the payment of shipping claims, but that the other claims were of the nature of bondholders' claims. That is a complete misapprehension. What were the other claims which we speak of as second-class claims? They were claims for injury to and wrongful seizure of property, for the plunder of business premises, and offences of that kind. They were also claims for services rendered and unpaid for, for contracts entered into for the performance of works with the Venezuelan Government which never have been met by the Venezuelan authorities.

Let me give your Lordships illustrations of the first class of these claims. There is a case of a British subject resident in one of the Venezuelan outports who, owing to the bombardment by the Government squadrons, was compelled to leave his home and seek safety in flight. On his return he found that his house had been plundered by the Venezuelan troops, and that his clothes and personal effects and live stock to the value of some £240 had been carried off. There is another case of a British subject settled for some years at Rio Grande, and owning an estate on which he cultivated tea and coffee. He was arrested, his house was pillaged, and a large amount of his property stolen. Now I ask your Lordships whether we were to take the line of saying that we have the right to demand compensation when British subjects are beaten, or stripped, or landed on a desert island, as some of the crews of these vessels were—that we were to come to their rescue—but that when it comes to injury to property, and the plundering of premises and so forth, then we were to sit with our hands folded and tell the sufferers they must shift for themselves. We are often told that British enterprise is being ousted from the markets of foreign countries, and I am afraid that it would be ousted with a vengeance if His Majesty's Government were to proclaim to the world their complete indifference to the maltreatment of their subjects in cases of this sort. That is not the line which is taken by the Governments of other countries; and I should be sorry if we were to fall behind them in that respect.

Now I will say one word on the claims of the bondholders. I observe a disposition to speak, to say the least of it, in disparagement of the bondholders and their claims. I am bound to say that I feel great compassion for the bondholders; and I think that in this case, and in many other cases, they have been abominably treated by the Powers to which they have made advances. But we have throughout placed these bondholders' claims on a wholly different category from the shipping claims and the second-class claims. It seemed to us desirable that, if there was to be a settlement with the Venezuelan Government, that settlement should be of a general and comprehensive character; and we thought that it ought, if possible, to include some kind of arrangement with the bondholders. But our proposals with regard to the bondholders never went further than this—we proposed that if there was an arbitration the bondholders' claims should go to arbitration; and that if, on the contrary, there was a direct settlement by negotiation at Washington, then the Venezuelan Government should give us an undertaking that they would make a fresh arrangement with the bondholders. That was not an engagement of a dangerous or far-reaching character. We were better able to make that proposal because we knew that a scheme for such a fresh settlement with the bondholders had been drawn up by a Committee representing the interests of the British and German bondholders, and that that claim had actually been laid before, and received the approval of, the Venezuelan Congress. There was, therefore, every reason to look forward to a satisfactory settlement with the bondholders; and, in point of fact, President Castro never raised any objection to this particular proposal. If your Lordships will look at Article VI. of the Protocol (page 226 of the Blue-book), you will find that the Venezuelan Government have undertaken to enter into a fresh arrangement respecting the external debt of Venezuela, with a view to the satisfaction of the claims of the bondholders. I do not think we went an inch too far in supporting the bondholders' claims; and on the other hand I protest against the allegation that there was nothing between these claims and the shipping claims which we placed in the first rank.

Then the noble Lord referred to the difference between the British and the German claims, and complained of us because we associated ourselves with the German Government in demanding that the claims of both Powers should be simultaneously dealt with by Venezuela. It is true that in some points the British and the German claims differed in their nature. We had, in the first place, claims for outrages on ships, which we placed in the first rank; and, in the second place, we had a great mass of claims for damage to property and the seizure of goods and for services unpaid, claims which we had not yet revised, and which we consequently placed in the second class. The Germans had no shipping claims, and therefore it was obviously impossible that they should have first-rank claims exactly corresponding with ours; but, on the other hand, they had claims which, in their eyes, were every whit as important and as strong as our shipping claims. Let me tell you what these claims were. They were claims for the exaction of forced loans, for the seizure of cattle, the plunder of houses, and the devastation of lands. And the German Government, in making these claims, desired it to be understood by the Venezuelan Government that these claims were not only pecuniary, but were also based on the ill-treatment of Germans by the Venezuelan authorities. I call your Lordships' attention to the fact that a certain portion of these claims had this peculiarity, that they had been revised by the German Government, and that they had been revised more than once; they had undergone examination at Caracas, and they had been subsequently taxed and considerably reduced at Berlin by the Legal Department of the German Foreign Office. It seems a perfectly natural thing that in respect to this set of claims the German Government should have laid it down that they declined to submit them to arbitration, but that, as regards the rest of their claims, they were ready to submit them to arbitration. It was indeed in support of these first rank claims that the German Government undertook to resort to coercion against Venezuela.

Your Lordships will find in the correspondence of 23rd December, that these German first rank claims were put fairly and fully before the Venezuelan Government; that on 1st January, President Castro accepted responsibility for these claims in principle; and that on 5th January, the two Governments required President Castro to declare not only that he accepted our demands in principle, but that if there were to be negotiations at Washington, those negotiations were to proceed on the assumption that the Venezuelan Government unreservedly accepted and agreed to be bound by the conditions which we had laid down. There was no mystery about these German first rank claims. They were put forward from the first; and, although the amount was larger than ours, they might have been settled by the Venezuelan Government in the course of a few hours. The noble Lord told us that we had bound ourselves to Germany, not taking sufficiently into account the sinister designs which he apparently attributes to that Power on the South American Continent. He spoke of a document—I never heard of it before, and I do not know from what quarter it reached him—which suggested that at the back of the action of the German Government was a desire to obtain a coaling station in Venezuela. I never heard of that. How far was it that we bound ourselves to go with the German Government? Thus far only, that both of us insisted upon the immediate settlement of the first rank claims, amounting altogether to £72,000 or £73,000. For the rest, both Governments were prepared to accept either the decision of a mixed commission, on which the Venezuelan Government would be represented, or the decision of the arbitral tribunal of The Hague. I ask your Lordships whether that was a rash and imprudent bargain, tying us in "adamantine bonds" to Germany, and obliging us to persevere in our so-called alliance up to a point that might have involved us in the most disastrous consequences.

One word in reply to what the noble Lord said as to the manner in which in this controversy we have dealt with the United States Government. I hope I may be allowed to say that I do not yield to the noble Lord, or to any one in this House, in my desire that nothing should be done to give offence to the susceptibilities of the United States, or to indicate to them that we have any desire to impugn the Monroe Doctrine. With regard to the United States, we certainly in this matter cannot be accused of having run the risk of alienating their sympathies by our conduct. It is true that we did not make our official reference to the United States Government until 11th November. That was, of course, some time before the actual issue of the ultimatum, and a considerable time before we actually resorted to coercive measures; but we had excellent reasons for knowing how the United States were likely to regard the question of our action in Venezuelan waters. The point had been raised, and raised in the most distinct manner, a few months before. When the German Government first considered the question of resorting to coercive measures they intimated to the American Government that, if the Venezuelan Government continued to decline settlement, it would have to be considered what measures of coercion should be used against it; and, my Lords, the German Government dotted the i's, because they explained that, according to their ideas, those coercive measures should be of the following kind: "After the posing of an ultimatum, first of all the blockade of the more important Venezuelan harbours, principally the harbours of La Guayra and Puerta Cabello, would have to be considered as an appropriate measure of coercion." "If this measure," continued the German Note, "does not seem efficient we would have to consider the temporary occupation on our part of different Venezuelan harbours, and the levying of duties in those places." There, my Lords, was a distinct intimation not only that coercion was intended, but that that coercion should take a particular shape.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: When was this?

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: 11th December, 1901. What was the reply of the United States Government? The reply was embodied in a memorandum handed to the German Ambassador by Mr. Secretary Hay. That memorandum begins by reciting an often quoted passage in a recently delivered message of President Roosevelt, which runs as follows. Speaking of the Monroe Doctrine the President further said—

> "This doctrine has nothing to do with the commercial relations of any American Power save that it in truth allows each of them to form such as it desires. We do not guarantee any State against punishment if it misconducts itself, provided that punishment does not take the form of the acquisition of territory by any non-American Power."

And then the writer of the memorandum continues—

> "His Excellency the German Ambassador on his return from Berlin conveyed personally to the President the assurance of the German Emperor that His Majesty's Government had no purpose or intention to make even the smallest acquisition of territory on the South American continent or the adjacent islands. This voluntary and friendly declaration was afterwards repeated to the Secretary of State, and was received by the President and the people of the United States in that frank and cordial spirit in which it was offered."

That remarkable memorandum was published in an American official paper, and was there for any of us to read who chose to pay attention to this matter. With so plain an indication as that of the policy of the United States Government there was no reason why we should have had any misgiving on the ground that objection might be anticipated in that quarter to measures of coercion resorted to by His Majesty's Government. We wished, however, to make assurance doubly sure; and on 11th November we instructed Sir Michael Herbert to inform the Secretary of State of our intentions, and we received, as we knew perfectly well we should receive, the answer that no objection was likely to be raised. Then the noble Lord was anxious for more information as to the character of the communications which, he had gathered, passed at different times between His Majesty's Government and the United States Government. The date on which the first official communication was made was, as I said a moment ago, on 11th November. It is quite true that that was not the only communication that passed between the State Department and the Embassy at Washington, or between the United States Embassy and the Foreign Office here. There have been constant communications—no doubt often of a very informal character, but still entirely sufficient when those who were engaged in them knew as well as we did that there was no room for misunderstanding on this subject; and I certainly am able to say that during the whole course of these negotiations not one single word was said or written by the United States Government which was not thoughtful and friendly and considerate towards this country. That is true of our relations with the United States Government. I think it quite possible that there may have been a section of public opinion in the United States, not, perhaps, sufficiently informed as to the facts of the case, which at one time took a different and somewhat excited view of the question; but now that matters have advanced as far as they have towards a settlement I shall remain sanguine that no one whose opinion is worth having in the United States will hold any other view with regard to the action and conduct of His Majesty's Government except that throughout the whole of these negotiations that conduct has been perfectly sincere and entirely above suspicion.

The Marquess of Lansdowne.

Towards the end of his speech the noble Lord referred to other matters about which he wished for information. He has put upon the Paper a notice of Motion for Papers. I gather that some of the points on which he desires to be informed are the full particulars of British claims, the question of the ownership of the island of Patos, the cost of the blockade, and also our correspondence with the United States Government. As to the full statement of the British claims, I do not hold out any hope, at any rate in the near future, of being able to lay that return on the table. They have not been revised. Those which are coming in, and which we shall have to consider as they come in, will eventually be dealt with by a mixed commission, which, for all I know, may reject a great number of them. The question of the island of Patos is one which has at various times engaged the attention of the various Governments interested, and I am under the impression that our legal advisers are of opinion that our title to the island, founded as it is upon long prescription, is an excellent one. As to the cost of the blockade I do not know whether my noble friend behind me will be prepared to give information on that subject; but

I am unable to agree, at present at any rate, to any general motion of this kind. I think I have a right to ask the noble Lord, if he does desire that other Papers should be supplied to your Lordships, that he should give us a full and accurate description of them; when he does so I shall be glad to consider his request.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: My Lords I was very anxious to avoid saying anything on this subject until I had had an opportunity of hearing from the Secretary of State his explanation, such as it is. For, after all, this massive but meagre and reticent Blue-book tells us very much that we do not particularly care to know and is singularly silent as to what we do particularly wish to know. I confess that the speech of the noble Marquess does not seem to me to vary very materially in character from this Blue-book. If, indeed, the word "Venezuela" could be expunged out of the records of the present Government, it would be a very fortunate thing for them. We have not yet forgotten the humiliation of some years ago, to which I will not further refer, and I confess that in this matter — these proceedings against Venezuela — we do not show to any more advantage than we did on that occasion; and I think we are fortunate indeed to have extricated ourselves with no more detriment to our character and our reputation than we have done. Now, with regard to the general remarks that are made about claims in South America, I feel a very lively sympathy. I will not, indeed, go as far as my noble friend behind me, who has not been at the Foreign Office, and therefore does not partake of that mysterious freemasonry which ties the tongues of those who have. But I strongly suspect that in the minds, though not in the tongues, of the majority of those who have occupied a position there, there is a very strong feeling that if a line of demarcation could be drawn round certain States which it would be invidious to name, and that some notice could be affixed to these limits to this effect, that those who went there or lent money there did so at their own peril, it would be a very great convenience to the Foreign Offices of Europe. I do not deny at all the gruesome character of some of the details contained in this Blue-book; but I should be very much surprised if, with a little pressure, the archives of the Foreign Office would not yield an almost similar record with regard to a number of other South American States. Therefore I think that when these States are governed, as we know they are, by a somewhat wild and natural Government, which is understood by those who partake of its blessings, but in no way resembles an European Constitution, it is not fair to urge the claims of those who have claims on these States as being in the same category as if they were urged against civilised European States. My noble friend Lord Avebury, with all the passion and all the pathos of a bondholder, took something of a different line.

*LORD AVEBURY: I have no interest whatever in the Venezuelan debt. I merely spoke as Chairman of the Corporation of Foreign Bondholders.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I never said my noble friend had a farthing in the Venezuelan debt; but I heard his constant denial of the fact, and that made me think he might have some other South American securities.

LORD AVEBURY: Oh!

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: My noble friend spoke, at all events, with the well simulated passion and pathos of the bondholder, such as well befits the President of the illustrious corporation over which he presides. But I confess that his speech, far from convincing me, added to the apprehension I already felt as to the policy of the Government. What did he say—

> "Venezuela," he said "is a comparatively prosperous community. It ought to pay its debts. Its debt is only so much per head."

Ah! that reasoning per head depends so very much on the quality of the head. My noble friend recited the finances of Venezuela in a manner which must have given gratification to any native of that State, if one had been within hearing, but which, I fear, is hardly borne out by actual statistics and facts. He alluded airily to the revenue of Venezuela as some £2,000,000 sterling, whereas it is certainly not more than 39,000,000 bolivars — and the bolivar is only equivalent to a franc—so that my noble friend will see that he cannot, by any process of arithmetic, make the revenue £2,000,000 sterling.

*LORD AVEBURY: That was an exceptional year. Surely the average should be taken.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: It was an exceptional year; the first year that showed a surplus for the last ten years. In all the other years there had been a deficit of 10,000,000 bolivars, or £400,000 a year, which is hardly likely to encourage the Venezuelan bondholders. But let us pursue my noble friend's argument further. He said that Venezuela was well able to pay its debts; and I waive that question for a moment to look at other States which are borrowing money at comparatively low rates of interest. Look at Uruguay and Costa Rica. I mention these with fear and trembling in this House. He says they pay nothing at all.

*LORD AVEBURY: Uruguay is paying regularly.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: Very well; it was Guatemala and Costa Rica. They pay nothing at all. What is the irresistible effect of this argument? If we are to pursue his course of policy, we ought now to engage in bombarding Guatemala and Costa Rica. If my noble friend had ever been at the Foreign Office and had read the despatches that come from South America, he would not have been there a month without very materially modifying his views on the policy to be pursued towards South American States. That is what I have to say as to the general question of South American claims as put forward by my noble friend. But the case as portrayed by the Blue-book is one which is, I think, exceedingly damaging to the Government, apart from general considerations such as those I have indicated. We know now that it was in the middle of December, 1901, that the German Government first proclaimed the policy of exacting penalties from Venezuela. It was on July 23, that the historic interview took place between the noble Marquess the Secretary of State and Count Metternich. On July 29, an ultimatum was sent to Venezuela. Several months afterwards there was a communication to the United States; and two days after that, I think, or about the same time, another ultimatum was sent to Venezuela. Well, then we come to November 13, which is a very striking date, because it was then for the first time that the nature of the German claims was communicated to his Majesty's Government, which has promised joint action until those claimd were satisfied—that is to say, the interval between July 23, when joint action was agreed upon, and November 13 was spent by His Majesty's Government under the bond of an agreement to exact the German claims without knowing what those claims were. I do not think that His Majesty's Government have any particular reason to complain in that matter, because, as far as I understand the Blue-book—and the Blue-book is singularly defective in some of its statements—the British claims were never really detailed until January 13. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State airily mentioned the sum of £600,000 as the British claim which, according to agreement, was one which the Germans were bound to sustain. Fortunately, all these agreements went into thin air under the pressure of events. On November 7 we have a final ultimatum delivered to the Venezuelan Government; and the noble Marquess says that, after a fortnight's blockade, the Venezuelan Government came to our views. But I think the blockade was somewhat more effective than he makes out, because on 10th December we seized their ships, and on 13th December the United States intervened with their proposition. From the moment the United States intervened, the question entered into the region of diplomacy, and whether a few more fishing vessels were seized or not matters very little to the course of events.

But what is extraordinary in this regard is this — that His Majesty's Government seem to have been constantly laying down large principles, from which if I read the Blue-book rightly, they were afterwards compelled to recede. The noble Lord has just told us that he put the bonds into a separate category of claims; but, if I read the despatch of 17th November correctly, I see that His Majesty's Government did not, however, desire, in their demands upon Venezuela, to draw a distinction between the various categories. Their object was to obtain a general settlement. The noble Lord says, however, that that was not the object of the Government, as they had put the bondholders into a separate category of their own, and the understanding between Germany and Great Britain was that they should not lay down their arms until the claims of the first rank were satisfied. There is nothing of this in the despatch of 17th November. On the contrary, they say—

> "His Majesty's Government quite concur in the view that, if joint action against Venezuela is undertaken, it should be maintained until the demands of both Governments, as finally agreed upon, are satisfied."

I see nothing about the first grade or the second grade, or about the bondholders being relegated to the background. It is a perfectly clear statement of the case that until the claims of both Governments are satisfied they shall continue their joint action, and that in the consideration of those claims no distinction of category shall be observed. Well, of course we know that they receded from that point.

Then we come to another principle which was laid down no less than three times in the Blue-book, and to which I confess I lend a general adhesion, only that it so very soon vanishes from our view under the influences that affected the policy of His Majesty's Government. Over and over again the noble Marquess says that Great Britain was claiming as much as Germany, that there was a claim for £600,000 which was produced in the month of January. One would have thought that that was not an excessive claim, but nothing comes of it; and I find in all the transactions in which His Majesty's Government have been engaged with the German Government, the ultimate result is that one receives £68,000 and the other £5,500. That represents very much the proportion of benefit received under the understanding by His Majesty's Government and the German Government. Mark you, I do not blame Germany for that; I blame His Majesty's Government; and I think that if there had been a little more equality of result to some of the agreements entered into with the German Government, the relations of the two countries would have been more full of mutual respect than perhaps they are at present. Well, that is another principle from which we receded. Then, on December 16, the German Ambassador and the noble Marquess held a conclave together at which they agreed that the first proposal of arbitration should be refused;

> "I informed his Excellency that the Venezuelan proposal, as it stood, was unacceptable."

and so on. Now comes a remarkable and very interestering fact. The Cabinet met that very day, and later in the afternoon the noble Marquess was able to inform the German Ambassador that the Cabinet had overruled him and were determined to have arbitration. I think it was one of the most curious episodes I have ever seen. In the Blue-book, page 177, under date December 18, 1902, we read.

> "I informed the United States Chargé d'Affaires this afternoon that the Cabinet had decided at its last meeting on the 16th to accept in principle the idea of settling the Venezuelan dispute by arbitration, and we had since ascertained that the view of the German Government was in accord with our own."

That again was one of the instances in which the first principles of the Secretary of State were overruled by the course of events, in this case by the Cabinet. The last occasion on which we can say that the same thing occurred was when the Government declined that Mr. Bowen should be accepted as Ambassador from Venezuela, which shortly afterwards they reconsidered and accepted. Then the Blue-book ends with an absolute agony of telegrams as the pressure of public opinion increases and the meeting of Parliament approaches. I remember very well that on Saturday, February 14th, there was to be a Cabinet, to settle the King's Speech, which was adjourned till Monday, February 16th; and it does not need a magician to see that it was the absolute determination of the Cabinet that they should have the good news of the settlement of the dispute by some means or another to announce in the

King's Speech to Parliament that caused the postponement of the Cabinet for those two days. But, at any rate, no one can read the almost pathetic succession of telegrams that passed between the Foreign Office and Washington during the first fortnight in February without seeing that the Cabinet had then taken affairs into its own hands, and had insisted upon a settlement.

There was one point of my noble friend's speech that the noble Marquess left entirely unnoticed—that was as to the utterances of his colleagues and subordinates with reference to this question. There is, for example, Lord George Hamilton. Lord George Hamilton is a very important Minister, or, perhaps, to speak more accurately, a Minister who has held many important posts. He usually speaks in the sympathetic seclusion of Ealing, which is, I believe, the principal town in his constituency; and it was with a feeling of alarmed apprehension that we learnt that he was about to speak at Bradford. When he got to Bradford the country was in a state of great tension with regard to this business, and therefore we watched the utterances of Lord George Hamilton with an attention which was somewhat unusual. He said—

> "In July last we took steps to ascertain that the measures proposed by us would in no way alienate the good feeling of the American Government and the American people."

Well, July was not December, 1901, when the German Government approached Washington; and it was not November, when the British Government approached Washington.

> "Two months later"—that would be, I suppose, in September—"the German Government informed us that they were exactly in the same position as we were."

It was July when the German Government gave that declaration. I really think that the Foreign Secretary ought to coach his colleagues better when they are going to speak on these subjects. Then he ended by a detail of the advantages of this policy, which appeared to consist in this—that the German and the British Press had exchanged some rough home truths, which would show that in future Great Britain was not to be insulted with impunity, and that a sort of rough-and-tumble had occurred, which would be eminently beneficial to the allies against Venezuela. My Lords, that is all very well between schoolboys, but it is not the way in which great nations come to harmonious relations. If I might venture to offer advice to the Government it is this—that for the future it should confine Lord George Hamilton to Ealing.

Now we have at last the long-promised explanation of the Government on these two important points, their special relations with the United States, and their alliance with Germany. What is the explanation of their relations with the United States? There was no formal announcement till November 11; but in the meantime there was an understanding — to speak colloquially, a sort of exchange of winks with the American Ambassador—which was eminently satisfactory to both parties. An exchange of winks is not the way in which two great nations treat one another on occasions of this kind, more especially on an occasion like this, when you are dealing with the very tenderest point of American susceptibilities, and one which we, having declared our adhesion to and acceptance of, are bound to respect with all the formality and all the courtesy in our power. The noble Marquess told us that they knew perfectly well what the view of the American Government was, because the German Government had approached the Government of Washington in 1901, and had ascertained their view categorically and in detail.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: The United States Government had published it.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I do not see how that affects my argument. My point is that it is not for the Government of Great Britain to approach Washington through the medium of Germany, which is the only way they did approach them.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: We approached them ourselves before any coercive measures were adopted.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: But not before any measures of coercion had been concerted; you had framed every measure of coercion long before you approached the United States Government. And what I say is this, whether it be well to read in the newspapers what the United States Government has said to the German Government or not, it is not in accordance with the comity of nations, it is not in accordance with the relations which ought to sway the Governments of London and of Washington, that the British Government should feel the pulse of Washington through the means of the German Government, and should abstain from formal communication with the United States Government until long after they had framed every measure of coercion categorically. I frankly say that, for my part, I wish to dismiss this ignominious and pitiable transaction as quickly as possible from my memory just as I wish to, and have dismissed the former episode of Venezuela from my memory also. The only reason for which it interests me, or, I suppose, any one now, is in regard to the effect which it may have on our relations with Germany and with the United States. I cannot believe, whatever may be thought by the noble Marquess as to the effect of his policy on the United States, that it can be a happy one. I cannot believe that the United States will be satisfied by an approach of this character, so long delayed, when it might so easily have been made beforehand. I hope with all my heart that, as the noble Duke the President of the Council said the other night, the relations of the United States with this country were never better than they are at present. I have often heard those sentiments uttered after dinner, and I always rejoice to hear them. But, if the relations of the United States and of His Majesty's Government are as good as they have ever been, it is no thanks to His Majesty's present Administration.

Now we come to the question of Germany; and that is a very delicate matter. The noble Marquess says it would have been quite impossible to do anything but what we did. "How could you have had," he said, with a touch of playful humour, "two ships chasing the same fishing-boat, one ship bearing German colours and the other the flag of the British?" He said there would have been terrible complications. But it seems to me the whole argument of the noble Marquess rests on this—that the operations against Venezuela must necessarily have been simultaneous in their nature. If Venezuela is so wealthy as my noble friend behind me seems to think, there would have been ample opportunity after the Germans had conducted their operations to put some pressure for our own part on the sponge which had not yet been squeezed dry; at any rate, it would have been open to us to take the line of France, of Belgium, and, I think, of other Powers, and to have given notice that in any warfare that might take place between Venezuela and Germany our interests in the matter should be in no way affected. I can imagine the Foreign Minister, when approached by the German Ambassador on 23rd July, saying—

> "There is nothing that I wish so much as good relations between our two countries; there is nothing I should desire so much as harmonious co-operation between Germany and Great Britain. There is no reason why that co-operation should not take place on some future occasion; but your Excellency must be aware, belonging to a nation so proud and delicate on the point of national honour, that there are circumstances, there are words said and written in heat, which cannot be wiped out in a moment, and I honestly think it would be in the interests of the good relations of both Powers that we did not act together on the present occasion."

I do not say that that would have been the policy which the noble Marquess need have followed. He may have been unaware of the feeling caused in Great Britain, not merely by articles and caricatures in the German Press, but by speeches of responsible German statesmen. He may not have been aware of the feeling, but it was his business to be aware of it. All I can say is this, that if we are to look in the future of our foreign relations to enterprises and alliances conducted as this has been and as others have been in other parts of the world by predecessors of the noble Marquess, I confess I feel more gloomy about those relations than I otherwise would be justified in feeling. It is no secret to anyone except the Prime Minister, who said he was not aware whether or not other nations regarded us with a feeling of antipathy and jealousy, that there is on the continent of Europe a cherished hostility to this country, partly unreasonable, partly, as I think, due to the action of His

Majesty's Ministers themselves. I think that, had they placed their case in the Boer War before Europe in an authoritative manner, it would have been well for this country and well for Europe. I ventured to put forward that view in December, 1901; and I remember a Minister, if I am not mistaken, my noble friend the Scottish Secretary, who, alluding to this idea of the Ministry issuing a diplomatic circular, giving a history of the events which led up to the war as we British saw them, said it was the greatest nonsense he had ever heard in his life.

I have a great respect for my noble friend the Scottish Secretary, and in matters appertaining to his own Department I bow my head before him. But I cannot help remembering that it was the almost invariable, at any rate the constant, practice of Prince Bismarck when he was engaged in any enterprise, in which he wished to conciliate the opinion of Europe, to use the method of the diplomatic circular; and, paying every homage to my noble friend the Scottish Secretary, I cannot help thinking that the authority of Prince Bismarck in foreign affairs is even greater than his. I do not say that by such a method you could have convinced the stipendiary authorities who infected the Press of some countries in Europe; but I do say that you could have convinced many thoughtful minds, minds which weigh judicially things laid before them, minds of great influence which were led away by the *ex parte* statements of the Press of Europe, and which gave their important and valuable suffrage against us. I put aside, too, the utterances of some of our Ministers which were ill-calculated to conciliate or secure the affections of the countries of Europe. But I am not disposed to blame altogether our conduct and our Ministers. I am only saying that our conduct and the conduct of our Ministers was not free from responsibility in this matter. But I do hold that, to whatever cause the feeling may be due—I have constantly said it in this House—the antipathy, the rancour, the jealousy of Europe, which I think by a different course of conduct might have been conciliated, constitute a very serious danger to our Government and to our country. I do hope this, that, having escaped in this most ill-advised enterprise from the consequences which might naturally have been reaped from the relations of Great Britain to Germany and the United States, we shall pause, and pause long, before we embark in any similar engagement.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Duke of DEVONSHIRE): My Lords, I scarcely think this is the opportunity on which we can profitably enter into a discussion of what ought to have been the course which should have been followed by our Government and Statesmen in explaining to the Governments and nations of Europe our exact position in regard to the Boer War. I scarcely think that your Lordships came down to the House to-night prepared to enter into a discussion of that character in connection with the Venezuelan negotiations. I should be quite unable to follow the noble Earl in a good deal of the somewhat minute, and I venture to think somewhat captious, criticism which he made after, apparently, a very minute study of the Papers which are contained in this Blue-book. I shall certainly not attempt to follow him in the controversy into which he entered with my noble friend, Lord Avebury, as to what ought to be the attitude of our Government in regard to foreign bondholders. But I cannot help observing that the noble Earl appeared, if I followed him correctly, to lay down a somewhat singular line of policy which, in his opinion, ought to be observed in our dealings in the future with a number of States in South America which he described, in language that I should have thought hardly befitted a late Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, as uncivilised and barbarous. So far as I could gather from the somewhat obscure remarks of the noble Earl on that subject, it is his opinion that a mark ought to be placed against the names of certain of these uncivilised and barbarous states, and that everybody ought to have fair warning that any negotiations and transactions into which they might enter with them would be transactions that would be entered into at their own peril. I do not think that that is a policy which has ever been held by any responsible Minister in this country, and I do not think it was the policy to which he himself adhered when he was responsible for the affairs of this country.

I am quite unable to follow the noble Earl into all the detailed criticism which he made on these despatches. He said, however, that we entered into this matter knowing nothing whatever about the extent or the character of the German claims. As my noble friend the Foreign Secretary has said this evening, we were perfectly aware more than a year ago of the extent of the German claims of the first rank. We knew their amount; and as to the claims other than those of the first rank, either German or English, all that we have ever asked is that they should be submitted to examination. It was only in respect of the first rank claims that either the German or our own Government demanded immediate satisfaction. Then the noble Earl complained that the Germans had obtained a very much larger sum than we have done. All, I think, we are concerned to know is that we have obtained satisfaction for those claims which were included in the first rank, and that we have received the whole of the amount which we have ever asked should be paid irrespective of arbitration. It seems to me to be a matter of perfect indifference to us whether the German claims of the same character, but in their opinion and in ours ranking equally in the first rank, were of a larger amount than ours or were not.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: Then why did the Foreign Secretary stipulate that the British and German Governments should receive an equal sum?

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: That may have been a proposal which was once put forward in order to establish perfect equality of action between the two Governments; but after consideration it was thought better, and I think wisely thought better, that we should confine our demand for immediate payment to those claims which were held to be in the first rank. Then the noble Earl raised some question, which I am afraid I did not entirely follow, as to the Despatch No. 198 in the Blue-book, in which my noble friend the Foreign Secretary stated that the Cabinet had decided at its last meeting, on the 16th, to accept in principle the idea of settling the whole dispute by arbitration, and that we had since ascertained that the view of the German Government was in accord with our own. The noble Earl seems to think that there is something entirely inconsistent in that declaration with something which had preceded it in the Blue-book. He went so far as to assert, on what authority I do not know, that my noble friend had been overruled by the Cabinet. When the first proposal for arbitration was made to us by the United States Government on behalf of Venezuela, that proposal was one for referring the whole of the dispute between us to arbitration. We thought at the time, and continued to think, that that was a proposal we could not accept, inasmuch as there was a certain proportion of our claims which we did not think it would be possible to refer to arbitration. At no time have the Government ever demurred in principle to the reference of the second portion of those claims to arbitration. I fail entirely to understand how the noble Earl finds any fault with this part of the transaction. The noble Earl referred to some speeches made by our colleagues, and he made a great point of an inaccuracy which he considers he has detected in the speech of Lord George Hamilton, as to the date when the communications were entered into with the United States Government Whether that communication took place in June or November, what is the point to which the noble Earl's criticism is directed?

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I will tell you at once. It was that I think that, in a matter affecting the Monroe Doctrine, our very first communication should have been to the United States Government.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: We have the assurance, which I think the House will take from my noble friend, that he has been constantly in communication with the American Ambassador and the American Embassy upon this subject; and why the noble Earl should describe all communications which are not contained in a formal despatch as winks I do not know. My noble friend has informed the House this evening that we were from other sources in possession of knowledge that the United States Government would not consider any such measures as those we had in contemplation with the German Government as any infraction of the Monroe Doctrine, unless they were followed by annexations of territory. Under those circumstances, and when it was also in our power to keep the United States Government constantly informed of what the position of the matter was, I see very little object that there would have been in addressing a formal despatch to the United States Government until the time came which immediately preceded action. The noble Earl threw some little doubt upon a phrase I used the other day to the effect that our relations with the United States Government had never been better than they are now. He said if that were so it was no thanks to His Majesty's Government. I venture to think that if they are so, and if they remain so, it will be no thanks to the noble Earl himself. The noble Earl says that we have been trifling with the tenderest point in American politics. I want to know where the noble Earl finds any foundation for that statement except in his own imagination. Where throughout those despatches does he find the slightest trace of irritation, or susceptibility, or injury to the relations between the United States Government and ourselves? If in future our relations with the United States Government are to suffer from anything that has taken place in regard to this matter, I cannot conceive anything more likely to produce this result than the ingenious attempts of the noble Earl to prove that the Government of his country have disregarded the tenderest sentiments of the American people. I cannot help thinking that the noble Earl, even if he holds the opinion on this subject which it appears he has formed, would have done better to have allowed a longer interval to pass before he suggested that in the action His Majesty's Government have taken in this question they have in the slightest degree attempted to disparage or dispute the validity of the Monroe doctrine.

EARL SPENCER: I did not intend to add any words to the very able speech of Lord Rosebery, but the concluding remarks of the noble Duke render it desirable that I should do so. I have not understood that my noble friend (Lord Rosebery) attacked the Government for trifling with the United States except in this respect—that they neglected to do what the German Government did in an early communication with the American Government on this subject. I confess that it does seem to me a very remarkable thing that there is no comment made in despatches of an earlier date than in the official document of November 11, which the noble Marquess referred to. We now hear that private communications were made.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I did not intend to say, and I do not know that I did say, that the United States had been unofficially approached before November 11. The noble Lord suggested that the despatch of November 11 was the only one in which reference was made to communications between His Majesty's Government and the Government of the United States, and he contrasted that with the Prime Minister's statement that there had been frequent communications between the two Governments. I said that there had been frequent and constant communications both in London and at Washington, but I did not suggest that these frequent communications had taken place before November 11.

EARL SPENCER: Then I do not understand the statement of the Prime Minister. If these unofficial communications were not made until after November 11, I think my noble friend (Lord Rosebery) was perfectly right in contrasting the action of the Government with that of the German Government. I think that there has been a serious want of method in this matter, that it was contrary to the ordinary comity of nations, and that it should not have been done. It seems to me it is a very difficult thing for one Government to act with another unless they know they can support every claim made by that other Government, but I hardly think we have been told to-night that His Majesty's Government were conversant with all the claims of Germany. There is one consequence of saying we should follow in the wake of

Germany, and following her claims, which I cannot help thinking is a very serious one. I should say it is a very dangerous and an entirely new doctrine that this country should use force for settling private debts in a foreign country. It is an entirely new proceeding that this should have taken place. The action of the Government is not consistently stated. Here is what the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs said—

> "I can frankly tell the House that it is not the claims of the bondholders that bulk largest in the estimation of the Government. I do not believe the Government would ever have taken the strong measures to which they have been driven if it had not been for the attacks by Venezuela upon the lives, the liberty, and the property of British subjects. . . . . In my view the bondholders have conferred very great benefits on these South American Republics, and are entitled to protection from their own country; and if that be true of the bond holders it is still more true of those who have invested their money in great industrial enterprises in that part of the world."

That points to approval of Government policy for reparation to individuals who had lost money in a foreign State, but the words of the Prime Minister are different.

He said—

> "I do not deny, in fact I freely admit, that bondholders may occupy an international position which may require international action; but I look upon such international action with the gravest doubt and suspicion, and I doubt whether we have in the past ever gone to war for the bondholders, for those of our countrymen who have lent money to a foreign Government."

It seems to me that the Government are incurring very grave responsibilities in the future, and may involve us in very great difficulties and dangers, if they are going to take up the question of the private debts of our people in foreign countries. I hold that my noble friend was fully justified in asking for further Papers. Surely the important Papers which were quoted or referred to by the Foreign Secretary must be included in some despatches from our Ambassadors at Berlin or Washington. It would have been of great importance to have had those Papers beforehand, and it is not sufficient to say that the United States Government have published them.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (The Earl of SELBORNE): Will the noble Lords try to get into their heads the idea that the claims which in one form or another His Majesty's Government have taken an interest in have been of three kinds. His Majesty's Government never contemplated any coercive measures against Venezuela in relation to the bondholders only. But they thought that, when a general settlement was going to take place before a tribunal with respect to the spoliation of the private property of British subjects, it was an excellent opportunity which ought not to be missed to arrange with the Venezuelan Government to deal at the same time with the vexed question of the bondholders. The noble Lords opposite have tried to make out that His Majesty's Government first of all made a hard and fast agreement for co-operation with Germany, and only tardily informed the United States. The fact is, the information was given to the United States before His Majesty's Government had finally settled upon the method of co-operation with Germany. In July His Majesty's Government agreed to discuss with Germany whether there should be co-operation. In November they nformed the United States, and later in November the final terms of the co-operation with Germany were fixed. That is a totally different presentation of dates to that given by the noble Earl opposite.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: You sent an ultimatum to Venezuela on July 29.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE: I do not admit that description. That was a general warning. It was not a joint ultimatum. It was a purely separate transaction.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I did not say it was a joint ultimatum. I said you sent an ultimatum.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH: The noble Earl has now admitted that His Majesty's Government threw in the bondholders as a sort of extra make-weight for convenience sake.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE: I did not say "extra make-weight" at all.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH: Then the bondholders were brought in as an addendum. I think that is a very dangerous precedent to have set. The noble Marquess the Secretary for Foreign Affairs stated in his despatch that none of the claims were to be treated differently. Therefore it may be argued that, for the protection of the bondholders, coercive measures have been applied.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: In the despatch we argued for a general settlement, and we objected to the idea that we were to put forward only the one class of claims.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH: The noble Marquess distinctly stated in the despatch that His Majesty's Government did not desire to draw any distinction between the various claims. Then the noble Earl has objected to the despatch of July 29 being called an ultimatum. The Prime Minister has called it "the first ultimatum to Venezuela," though it seems to me that "the first ultimatum" is a rather tortuous epithet.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: Read the last sentence of Despatch No. 110.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH: In his despatch of July 29th, 1902, the noble Marquess says—

> "You should intimate to the President and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, in unmistakable terms, that unless His Majesty's Government receive explicit assurances that incidents of this nature shall not recur, and unless the Venezuelan Government promptly pay to the injured parties full compensation wherever satisfactory evidence has been furnished to His Majesty's Government that such is justly due, His Majesty's Government will take such steps as may be necessary to obtain the reparation which they are entitled to demand from the Venezuelan Government in these cases, as well as for any loss to British subjects caused by the unjustifiable conduct of the Acting Venezuelan Consul at Trinidad, and on account of the railway claims."

I think that may very fairly be described as an ultimatum.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: Hear, hear.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH: The real object of the Motion was to secure a broad statement of the case against Venezuela and the case for the Government. As I do not think the situation would be improved in any way by taking a division, I will not put your Lordships to the trouble of dividing.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I want to say one word of personal explanation. I never called the South American Republics barbarous, and I expressly disclaim the policy of drawing a line around such as were defaulting and warning people they could only go in at their peril. I said it was an idea that had occurred to the brain of the Foreign Office, but that it had never reached their tongue.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 2nd March, 1903.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.—

Bridgwater Gas Bill.
Broadstairs Gas Bill.
Central London Railway Bill.
Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill.
City and South London Railway Bill.
Commercial Gas Bill.
Coventry Electric Tramways Bill.
Crystal Palace District Gas Bill.
Gas Light and Coke Company Bill.

Gorleston and Southtown Gas Bill.

Great Northern and City Railway Bill.

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (New Lines and Extensions) Bill.

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (Various Powers) Bill.

Great Northern Railway Bill.

Great Southern and Western Railway Bill.

Great Western Railway (Pension Fund) Bill.

Hampton Court Gas Bill.

Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill.

Ipswich Gas Bill.

London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill.

Maidstone Gas Bill.

Metropolitan District Railway (Works) Bill.

Midland and Belfast and Northern Counties Railways Bill.

Midland Railway Bill.

Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway Bill.

North Middlesex Gas Bill.

North-West London Railway Bill.

Scarborough Gas Bill.

Sittingbourne District Gas Bill.

Sutton District Water Bill.

Winchester Water and Gas Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz. :—

East Ardsley Gas Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the list reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means, as intended to originate in the House of Lords, he has certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with in the following cases, viz. :—

Dewsbury, Batley, and Birstal Tramways.

Hamilton, Motherwell, and Wishaw Tramways (Part III.) Substituted Bill.

Preston and Horwich Tramways.

And that he has certified that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in the following cases, viz. :—

Gosport, Fareham, and Cosham Tramways.

Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire).

Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire).

Wakefield and District Tramways.

PRIVATE BILLS PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—

Gosport, Fareham, and Cosham Tramways [Lords].

Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) [Lords].

Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) [Lords].

Wakefield and District Tramways [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz :—

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements).

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

COVENTRY ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS BILL.

Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

LANARKSHIRE AND DUMBARTONSHIRE RAILWAY.

Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

BARNSLEY CORPORATION (WATER) BILL,

BATH CORPORATION WATER BILL,

BECKENHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

CORK HARBOUR BILL,

COVENTRY AND ARLEY RAILWAY BILL,

DUBLIN IMPROVEMENT (BULL ALLEY AREA) BILL,

EAST HAM IMPROVEMENT BILL,

EBBW VALE WATER AND IMPROVEMENT BILL,

ERITH TRAMWAYS AND IMPROVEMENT BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

GATESHEAD CORPORATION BILL,

GRINDLEFORD, BASLOW, AND BAKEWELL RAILWAY BILL,

HAINAULT FOREST BILL,

HYDE CORPORATION BILL,

Read a second time, and committed.

LEIGH CORPORATION BILL,

LLANDRINDOD WELLS IMPROVEMENT BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

MERTHYR TYDVIL URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

NANTYGLO AND BLAINA WATER BILL

NELSON CORPORATION BILL,

NEW HUNSTANTON IMPROVEMENT BILL,

PLYMOUTH CORPORATION BILL,

SOUTH SHIELDS CORPORATION BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

WESTERN VALLEYS (MONMOUTHSHIRE) SEWERAGE BOARD BILL,

WEST HAM CORPORATION BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

LONDON'S TRAFFIC—TUBE RAILWAY SCHEMES POSTPONED.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. JEFFREYS, Hants, N.) said he had had the advantage of a conference with the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords and the President of the Board of Trade, and they had come to the conclusion that certain of the Bills connected with London traffic ought to be postponed until the result of the Commission dealing with this matter had been reported. The deep-level railways which they thought ought to await the completion of this inquiry were the Central London Railway (New Lines) Bill; Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton (New Lines and Extensions) Bill; North-West London (Marble Arch to Victoria) Railway Bill; Clapham Junction to Marble Arch Railway (Nos. 1 and 2) Bill; Metropolitan District Railway Works Bill.

There were certain other Bills which they thought might go to Committees, namely: Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill; Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (Various Powers) Bill; Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Transfer Bill; City and North-East Suburban Electric Railway Bill.

There were, besides, certain other railway measures which were doubtful, and these they thought ought to be held over until the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, the President of the Board of Trade, and himself had considered them. These Bills were the City and South London Railway (Angel and Islington) Bill, and the Metropolitan-District Railway (Various Powers) Bill.

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Urquhart; and Duthie; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE.

Petitions for extension to women: From Stockport and other places; Yorkshire (two); and Clitheroe; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Sutton-on-Sea; Skegness; and Maltby; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TELEGRAPHS (FOREIGN-WRITTEN PRESS TELEGRAMS).

Copy presented, of the Telegraph (Foreign-Written Anglo-Norwegian and Anglo-Swedish Press Telegram) Regulations, 1903. Dated 9th February, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TELEGRAPHS (FOREIGN-WRITTEN PRESS TELEGRAMS).

Copy presented, of the Telegraph (Foreign-Written Anglo-Danish Press Telegram) Regulations, 1903. Dated 9th February, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (PROVISIONAL ORDERS).

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade of their Proceedings under The General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, and The General Pier and Harbour Act (1861) Amendment Act, Session 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 47.]

ARMY (IMPERIAL YEOMANRY).

Copy presented, of Training Return of Imperial Yeomanry for 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, ETC).

Copy presented, of Statistics of Public Elementary Schools and Training Colleges, 1901–2 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903-4.

Copy presented, of Estimates for Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending 31st March, 1904, together with a Copy of the Memorandum by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury relating thereto [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 48.]

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).

Copy presented, of Colonial Report, No. 382 (Trinidad and Tobago), Report for 1901–2 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COMMITTALS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Returns from the Clerks of the Crown and Peace of the number of Persons committed for Trial in 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORT).

Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Northern Division of Scotland for the year 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

Estimates presented, for the year 1903–4, with Explanation of Differences [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 49.]

NAVY (STATEMENT EXPLANATORY OF ESTIMATES).

Copy presented, of Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty explanatory of the Navy Estimates, 1903–4 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2940 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House:—

Augmentation of Benefices.

Copy of Return of Proceedings under the Augmentation of Benefices Act, 1863, up to and inclusive of the 28th February, 1903 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 50.]

COUNTY COUNCILS (IRELAND) (SALARIES).

Return ordered, "showing the salary and emoluments of the secretary of each County Council in Ireland and the remuneration paid to permanent and temporary clerks employed in the secretary's office in each county in Ireland, for the three years ending the 31st day of March, 1900, 1901, and 1902 respectively."—(*Mr. M'Govern.*)

DRAMA AND OPERA (SUBSIDIES) (FOREIGN COUNTRIES, ETC.).

Address for "Return from British Diplomatic or Consular Officers as to financial support, whether in the form of subsidies, guarantees or buildings or sites for buildings, given from State or municipal resources to dramatic, operatic, or musical performances in the countries to which such officers are accredited, specifying in each case the amount or value and the conditions (if any) attached thereto."—(*Mr. Stuart Wortley.*)

BRITISH MUSEUM.

Copy ordered, "of account of the income and expenditure of the British Museum (Special Trust Funds) for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1903; and Return of the number of persons admitted to visit the Museum and the British Museum (Natural History) in each year from 1897 to 1902, both years inclusive; together with a statement of the progress made in the arrangement and description of the collections, and an account of objects added to them in the year 1902."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Police Superannuation—Offences against Discipline.

MR. LODER (Brighton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is competent for a watch committee to require additional service in the police force before granting a pension to a constable who has rendered twenty-five years service, but who has, during his service, been punished for disciplinary offence by reduction in class.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) It is difficult to answer a general question such as this. But it will be seen from Section 1 of the Police Act of 1890 that it is twenty-five years approved service which entitles a constable to a pension: and by Section 4, under which deductions may be made from a constable's service in respect of sickness, misconduct, or neglect of duty, approved service means such service as may, after such deductions, if any, be certified to have been diligent and faithful. It might therefore happen that the actual service of a constable would have to amount to more than twenty-five years before he became entitled to a pension.

Mails to Japan, Hong Kong, etc.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.): To ask the Postmaster General if he can state how many letters were sent from this country to Japan, Shanghai, and Hong Kong, respectively, under the mail contract with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, with the steamer which left Vancouver in connection with the mail leaving London on 8th January last; the total weight of the mails which left this country by the same mail for Japan, Shanghai, and Hong Kong respectively; and when the mails which left this country on 8th January last are due at Yokohama, Shanghai, and Hong Kong.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I am only able to give the required particulars in regard to the mail for Japan made up in London. That mail is estimated to have contained 8,410 letters, and the total weight of it was 4,715 lb. Only a small amount of correspondence for China and Hong Kong is forwarded by the Vancouver route, and particulars of that despatched on the 8th of January last have not been recorded. The mails sent on that date were due at Yokohama on the 9th of February, at Shanghai on the 14th, and at Hong Kong on the 17th of February.

Home Office Order—Definition of Suitable Sanitary Accommodation.

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will give instructions to have copies of the Order, dated 4th February, 1903, determining what is sufficient suitable accommodation in the way of sanitary conveniences, printed and distributed to Members, in order that they may forward them to the employers and others interested.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) The Order has already been printed as a Statutory Rule, and has been widely published, and I think duplicate printing and publication is hardly necessary. Any Member of the House applying to the Chief Inspector of Factories at the Home Office will be supplied with Copies of the Order and of the Circular explaining its provisions. Copies of the Order can also be obtained from the usual sources at the price of one penny.

Alleged Grievances of Customs Boatmen—Reply to Memorial.

Mr. LUKE WHITE (Yorkshire, E.R., Buckrose): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is now in a position to reply to the representations of the Customs boatmen.

(*Answered by Mr. Hayes Fisher.*) Proposals affecting the whole Waterguard Department have been made by the Board of Customs and are now under the consideration of the Treasury.

Local Education Authorities—Population Grants.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether the population grants will be continued; if so, will these grants be paid to the local education authorities, who will be responsible for the maintenance of the schools earning such grants.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The answer to both paragraphs of the Question is in the affirmative.

Education Act, 1902—Aid Grant—Basis of Calculation.

Dr. MACNAMARA: To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether the average attendance on which the New Aid Grant will be paid will be calculated on the same basis as that on which the Block Grant is now paid.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The average attendance on which the Block Grant is paid will be taken as the basis for calculation of the New Aid Grant.

Education—Payment of Block Grant.

Dr. MACNAMARA: To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that, owing to the delay in the payment of the Block Grant by the Board of Education, difficulty will be caused by the shortage of municipal cash at the outset of operations under the Education Act; whether he is aware that this shortage will amount approximately in the residue of the County of Lancashire to £80,000, and in most of the urban districts in that county, which will be autonomous for elementary education, to sums which will vary from £1,000 to £6,000; and whether, in view of the burdens thus cast upon most of the new authorities, the Board of Education can see its way to pay the whole of the Block Grant by quarterly instalments, including grants that will become due after the end of the Government's financial year.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The Board of Education are aware of the difficulty to which reference is made in the first part of the Question, but they have no exact knowledge of the amounts of shortage in different areas. I do not desire either to dispute or to admit the figures put down by the hon. Member. The Board are unable "to pay the whole of the Block Grant by quarterly instalments, including grants that will become due after the end of the Government's financial year," because their disbursements are restricted to the sums voted by Parliament for the financial year. This provision only covers the payment in the year of Block Grants maturing for payment within the year, and upon these instalments will be paid as far as practicable; but there is no margin for payment of instalments on "Block Grants" maturing in the succeeding year. The Board have already stated what they are prepared to do to assist the new authorities as regards the time of payments of the Aid Grant and Block Grant. For any further assistance the local authorities may apply to the Local Government Board to enable them to spread over a period of years the charge which is necessary in order to provide them with a working balance.

Causeway at Loughale, Orkney.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the Lord Advocate if the attention of the Government has been called to the progress of the construction of a causeway over the Ayre, at Loughale, Orkney; and if the necessary steps will be taken to ensure the completion of the said work at an early date.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) The Congested Districts Board are informed that the roadway at the east end, so far as laid off, has been formed.

Steps have been taken to ensure that the District Committee will complete this work as soon as possible.

Importation of Foreign Agricultural Produce.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether the Board has taken any method of informing the agriculturists of the United Kingdom that the importations of dairy produce from abroad last year are valued in the Board of Trade Returns at more than £20,500,000 for butter, £6,400,000 for cheese, and £6,399,000 for eggs, while poultry also exceeded £1,000,000; and whether he sees his way to introduce such measures for promoting improved methods of dairy working and co-operation, and such economical transport of produce between the country and towns as will enable British farmers to retain a large portion of the £34,000,000 now sent abroad for foreign produce.

(*Answered by Mr. Hanbury.*) It has been for many years past the practice to publish in the Journal of the Board of Agriculture a special article on the subject of the imports of agricultural produce during the year, and an article dealing with the imports for 1902 will appear in the forthcoming number. We have also from time to time given publicity to descriptions of improved processes of dairying employed in the Colonies and abroad, and of the systems adopted with regard to the production and distribution of dairy produce and eggs in Denmark, Ireland, and other countries. I have myself repeatedly called the attention of representative bodies of agriculturists to the importance of organisation and combination in the directions to which the hon. Member refers. I have been in communication with the Postmaster General on the subject of the collection and forwarding of parcels of agricultural produce; and I also hope that the extended use of motor vans and cars may further assist in the same direction.

Local Government Areas in London—Assimilation of Boundaries.

MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he intends to introduce this session a Bill to assimilate the boundaries of Parliamentary Divisions and Metropolitan Municipal Boroughs within the county of London.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Last year I introduced a Bill on this subject, having been assured that it would meet with no opposition. In point of fact, however, the Bill was opposed from both sides of the House, and I did not find it practicable to make progress with it. I am not prepared to deal with the matter in the present session, unless I am satisfied that the Bill would be treated as an unopposed measure.

Local Authorities (Acquisition of Land) Return—Date of Publication.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can state when the Return, Local Authorities (Acquisition of Land), granted on 8th July last year, is likely to be issued.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) There is a good deal of difficulty in obtaining the information required for a Return of this kind, and in the present case it has been necessary to communicate with more than 9,000 authorities. Some of them have not yet furnished the requisite particulars, although repeated applications have been made to them. The Return is, however, in a forward state, and will be issued at the earliest date practicable.

Ireland — Interference by the Local Government Board with Elected Representatives.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the cases of interference by the Local Government Board in Ireland with elected representatives; whether he will take this matter into consideration, and provide a remedy by amending the Local Government Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) This question has reference to the action of the Local Government Board in the case of Mrs. O'Neill, a midwife, in the service of the Guardians of the Rathdown

Union. In view of the importance apparently attached to the case I will briefly set out the facts. Mrs. O'Neill was suspended by the Guardians on the ground that she had left the workhouse without the permission of the master and matron. It was also alleged that, in order to cover her default, Mrs. O'Neill untruthfully stated she had obtained permission from the matron. The Guardians requested the Board to confirm the suspension and authorise her dismissal. In the exercise of her statutory right Mrs. O'Neill appealed to the Board against the decision of the Guardians. The Board thereupon directed a sworn inquiry to be held for the purpose of eliciting all the facts. It transpired at the inquiry that the midwife endeavoured to see the master to obtain leave of absence, but that having failed to see him she told the matron and understood that she had her permission to go away. Mrs. O'Neill doubtless committed an error of judgment in assuming that she had the permission of the matron to leave the workhouse, but the Board did not consider that her action, under all the circumstances, justified the extreme penalty of dismissal, and more especially as she was an efficient officer of some standing and had never been admonished on any previous occasion. I have personally examined the facts of the case and am satisfied that the Board could not have arrived at any other conclusion. I have reason to believe that the matron, who is a nun, is indisposed to regard what has happened as a cause for a continuance of any unpleasant relations with the midwife, and I should hope that the Guardians, on a reconsideration, will permit the latter to resume duty.

Compulsory Acquirement of Lands at Loughmore and Woodburn — Report of Arbitrator.

COLONEL McCALMONT (Antrim, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when the Report of the arbitrator in connection with the compulsory acquirement of certain lands at Loughmore and Woodburn by the Belfast Water Commissioners will be made public.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The final award of the arbitrator has already been published in respect of three of the sections into which this work was divided. It will be published in the course of a few days in respect of the fourth section. With regard to the remaining section, which includes Woodburn, the draft award will be published as soon as the spring season permits a proper inspection of the lands.

Ireland—Requisition of Private Property for Public Service.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the police at Maryborough requisitioned a horse and car, the property of a resident of Ballincanty Killurin, King's County, for the conveyance to the lunatic asylum, Maryborough, of an escaped patient from that institution; and will he explain upon what grounds the constabulary authorities have refused to pay the claim of the car owner.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The police did not refuse to pay this claim. They forwarded it to the asylum authorities, by whom it was paid.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

War Commission.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when he anticipates receiving the Report of the War Commission now sitting; and whether he will consent to suspend his final decisions regarding the new Army Scheme until the information afforded by that inquiry has reached him.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): As my hon. friend will see by referring to the reply given by my right hon. friend on Thursday last† to a Question put by the hon. Member for South Donegal, it is not possible at present to give any definite reply to the first part of the Question. As regards the second part of the Question it is not apparent what final decisions my hon. friend desires to suspend, but no steps are being taken which are not in accordance with the decision of Parliament two years ago.

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† See page 920.

MR. MALCOLM: If the right hon. Gentleman is not able to take advantage of the information elicited by the War Commission can he say what return the nation will get for the money laid out on the Commission?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Cape Town Military Scandal.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that Colonel H. Cooper, C.M.G., who held the position of Boer Commandant at Cape Town from 1st April, 1900, was present at the dinner given at Mount Nelson Hotel on Christmas Eve, 1901, and was at that time resident in the hotel; and that he did not stop the attack made upon Mr. Stanford in the grounds at the back of the hotel; can he state whether Colonel Cooper took any, and if so what, steps to investigate the matter; did he make any, and if so what, report to Lord Kitchener; why was the report of the legal proceedings, in which a sum of £1,500 damages and £2,000 costs were recovered by Mr. Stanford against ten officers in the High Court of Cape Colony, excluded from the Cape papers by the action of the Military Press Censor; why were not the apologies offered by the ten officers involved allowed to appear in the Cape Press, owing to the action of the Press Censor; and can he now give any explanation of this occurrence, and of the steps he intends to take in the matter.

MR. BRODRICK: These matters are at this moment the subject of inquiry; therefore, until the inquiry is concluded, I am sure the hon. Member will understand that I cannot reply to individual questions on the subject.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I desire to give notice that on the Estimates I will go completely into the details of this transaction, and give the names of the officers.

Bushmanland Borderers Regiment.

MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the statement made in the Cape Parliament on 31st October, 1902, by the Attorney General, Mr. Graham, that the Bushmanland Borderers Regiment was raised by the Imperial Government, and to the statement of Mr. Merriman on the same occasion, that the Bushmanland Borderers had committed outrages, and that two of them were in gaol at Malmesbury; and will he state what proportion of this corps were coloured men, and by whose orders they were enlisted and armed.

MR. BRODRICK: The Bushmanland Borderers was raised for local service in Cape Colony at the recommendation of the Premier of Cape Colony, their employment being specially restricted to the defence of their own locality and property in case of need, and they were consequently not enrolled for general service. I am not aware of the proportion of coloured men in its ranks. I must point out that the expression "coloured men" is commonly used in South Africa to mean half-castes, not natives, and many of such half-castes are on the electorate roll of Cape Colony.

Volunteer and Militia Artillery Armaments.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the amount of money allocated as the result of the recommendations of the Mowatt Committee to the purchase of new guns for Volunteer and Militia Batteries; how much of this money has now been expended; how many Volunteer and Militia Batteries have been re-armed; how many are still armed with obsolete weapons; how many new guns have been procured; and how many Regular Batteries have been created since January, 1899.

MR. BRODRICK: The Mowatt Committee did not deal with new guns for the Auxiliary Forces Artillery, 200 of which had been already ordered at a cost of £750,000. All this money has been spent. Forty-four Volunteer Batteries have been or are in process of being re-armed with modern 4·7 guns and three Militia Field Batteries with field guns. There are eighty-one Volunteer heavy batteries still in possession of old type equipment. Two hundred and twenty heavy guns in all have been procured. The number of Regular Horse and Field Batteries created since January, 1899, is sixty-six.

Provisional Regiments of Cavalry.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many provisional regiments of cavalry are at present in existence; what is the cost and strength of these regiments; for what purpose are they now maintained; and what is intended with respect to them in the future.

MR. BRODRICK: Six regiments are at present in existence. The average strength is 898, or deducting men on gratuity furlough, 714; and the average number of horses is 370. These regiments were originally established during the war pressure to provide drafts for cavalry regiments abroad, and are now maintained as the most suitable organisation into which to form the large surplus of men of the cavalry branch now existing. Three of these regiments will before long be absorbed, but the other three will be maintained for the present. The cost can only be very roughly estimated at £50,000 a year per regiment.

Naval Officers—Training Curriculum.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the curriculum for the first four years of training for naval officers under the new system has yet been settled; and, if so, whether it will be laid at once upon the Table of the House.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The new curriculum has not yet been settled. Before arriving at a definite conclusion with respect to it, the Admiralty desire to obtain advice from those qualified to form an opinion as to the subjects to be studied, the time to be devoted to each subject, etc. When the curriculum is settled I shall be glad to lay a copy of it on the Table of the House.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Is there any chance of the information being given before the Estimates are taken?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am afraid not.

Indian Army—India's Proportion of Charge.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, in view of the fact that the House was informed last Autumn that the question as to the distribution of the charge in respect of the increased pay of the British soldier in India had been referred to the arbitration of the Lord Chief Justice, will he state whether his Lordship has yet given his award.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The case has not yet been presented to the Lord Chief Justice. The charges to which the arbitration refers do not come into course of payment before April, 1904.

St. Patrick's Day.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether the 17th March has been declared a public holiday in British Colonies; and, if so, will he state in what Colonies and in what years.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E., for Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN): The information possessed by the Colonial Office is not sufficient to enable me to answer the Question of the hon. Member.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, Co., E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that numerous Irish Premiers in the Colonies have invariably declared the 17th March as a public holiday?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I am not aware of that.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman make inquiries into this matter?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes. I have only just received the answer from the Colonial Office. I will look into the matter and communicate with the hon. Member.

Congo Free State—Berlin General Act.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government have taken, or propose to take, steps towards procuring the co-operation of the principal Signatories to the Berlin General Act in efforts to restrain the abuses which have grown up under the rule of the Congo Free State in violation of the provisions of that Act.

The UNDER SECRETARY for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord Cranborne, Rochester): No, Sir. His Majesty's Government are not at present contemplating any steps such as the right hon. Baronet indicates.

British Guiana Sugar Plantations—Indian Coolie Labour.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government are aware that the Crown Colony of British Guiana contributes one-third of the expense of immigration into that colony of Indian coolies for work on sugar plantations, and that His Majesty's Government guarantee to the Indian Government the payment of wages to, and of return passages to India for, such coolies. Does the Sugar Convention, by Art. VII., impose on the Permanent Commission at Brussels the duty of pronouncing whether such contributions or guarantees constitute a direct or indirect bounty on the production or exportation of sugar; does the Convention, in the event of an affirmative decision on the point, bind His Majesty's Government, by Art. I. and Protocol A1 and A3, to suppress the payments and guarantee in question; and have His Majesty's Government received any communications on the subject from the authorities of the colony.

Lord CRANBORNE: The first and fourth Questions of my hon. friend should be put to the representative of the Colonial Office. With regard to the other Questions, the interpretation of any words in an agreement is not usually made the subject of an official statement until the circumstances have arisen which require such a statement.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Is the Foreign Office quite sure that it understands this Question?

No answer was returned.

British Missions to Foreign Courts.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, has a new regulation been made by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the effect that the duration of the appointments of heads of missions at Foreign Courts shall, in future, not be extended beyond five years; and, if so, on what date was that new regulation made.

Lord CRANBORNE: The regulation dealing with the duration of the appointments of heads of missions was made in 1872, and has not been altered since that date.

Post Office Savings Bank.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if, before introducing any Bill relating to Savings Banks, he will lay upon the Table of the House a detailed Return of the securities standing, on the 31st of December, 1902, in the names of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt on account of the Post Office Savings Bank Fund, and the Trustees Savings Bank Fund, such Return to show the nominal amount, and the value on the date aforesaid, of such securities, and the dividend or interest payable thereon.

The following Question also appeared on the Paper:—

Mr. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will, before the introduction of the Savings Banks Bill, grant the Return relative to Post Office and Trustee Savings Banks Funds standing on to-day's Notice Paper.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): The information asked for by the hon. Members as regards the assets of the Trustee Savings Banks Fund and their value at the 20th November, 1902, was presented to the House on the 20th instant,* and has been ordered to be printed. If either of the hon. Members will move for a similar Return of the assets of the Post Office Savings Bank Fund and their value at the 31st December last there is no objection to its being given in anticipation of the information annexed to the Annual Report of the Postmaster General.

MR. LOUGH: Will the right hon. Gentleman undertake not to proceed with his Bill until this information has been provided ?

MR. RITCHIE: I do not know whether it is possible to do that, but if the hon. Member will put down the Motion for the Return the information will be given as soon as possible.

MR. CHANNING: I will put it down.

Board of Trade—President's Salary.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can say when Parliament provided a specific salary for the holder of his office for services rendered in the Department; and whether he can lay any Papers showing why effect was never given to the Resolution passed by the House on the Motion of the then Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1826, that His Majesty be enabled to grant a salary of £5,000 to the President of the Board of Trade.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The salary of the President of the Board of Trade is sanctioned by the Act "7 George IV., cap. 32." The post was previously held in conjunction with the office of Treasurer of the Navy, the salary of which was £3,000 a year. As regards the Motion passed by the House of Commons on the 6th April, 1826, I fear there are no Papers that I could usefully lay, but a reference to "Hansard" shows that the majority (eleven), by which the Motion of the then Chancellor of the Exchequer was carried, was considered too small to justify His Majesty's Government in then proceeding with the proposal that the salary should be £5,000 a year, and £2,000 was accordingly agreed to.

The Royal Welsh Fusiliers' Goat.

MR. D. A. THOMAS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he will state under which section or sections of Vic. 57 and 58, c. 57, and 59 and 60 Vic., c. 15, instructions were in the first instance given to slaughter the goat of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers on his landing at Southampton last month, and a refusal was made to the request of the officers of the regiment to be allowed to retain the head and horns for preservation; whether the conferences between the authorities of the War Office and the Board of Agriculture as to the proper course to be pursued under the circumstances were held on the initiative of the War Office or on that of the Board of Agriculture; whether any other Department was consulted before the decision to set aside the provisions of the Acts of Parliament was come to; whether, in consequence of the action of his Department, he contemplates any legislation; and, if so, will he consider the advisability of relaxing the provisions of the present law in the case of animals kept as pets by regiments.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The answer to the first part of the Question is Section 1 of the Diseases of Animals Act, 1896. Exemption is already allowed in the case of regimental pets, but from the reply received from the officer in command of the battalion it appeared that the goat had been purchased in South Africa to replace one which had been presented to the regiment by Her late Majesty and that it would probably not be retained as the regimental pet. On a statement by the Deputy Adjutant General that it was in fact the recognised regimental goat authority for its landing was given. No order for the slaughter of the animal so long as it was not landed was given, and no instructions whatever were issued with regard to the head and horns as suggested in the Question.

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* See page 478.

Aliens in Wormwood Scrubs Prison.

MR CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many foreign prisoners are now confined in Wormwood Scrubs Prison; what proportion they form of the total number of prisoners; how many of them were convicted of indictable offences; and what is their average sentence.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): The information asked for by my hon. friend will be included in the general Return of aliens now in prison, which, as I stated the other day in answer to the hon. and gallant Member for Central Sheffield, I am obtaining for the purpose of laying before the Royal Commission.† I think a complete Return is more satisfactory than scattered information as to particular prisons.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): Cannot the Return be made to the House of Commons?

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: Certainly. If it is wished, I will give the information in answer to a Question.

Public Companies—Fraudulent Balance Sheets.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether he will state when he proposes to introduce legislation for the purpose of amending the law relating to fraudulent balance sheets of public companies.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): I am anxious to introduce a Bill at the earliest possible date, and I am now in communication with the Lord Chancellor.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is fresh legislation necessary?

No answer was returned.

Mail Contracts.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he will explain the cause of the delay in calling for tenders for the mail service between this country and India, the East, and Australia; and if he will say when the present contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Companies expires.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Notice has been given to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company and the Orient Steam Navigation Company to terminate their contracts for the mail services between this country and India, the East, and Australia on the 31st of January, 1905. The question of the future requirements of the service is being carefully considered by the several Departments of the Government concerned; and a decision will be arrived at as soon as possible.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: Why have the contracts been extended two years? Will Papers be laid before Parliament?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The contract has not been extended. We had to give two years notice, dating from January 31st last, that we wished to terminate the contract, and that is all we did. The notice will not take effect for two years.

Unprofitable Telegraphic Business.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been directed to the Parliamentary Return just issued, from which it appears that there was a loss, including interest on telegraph loans, of nearly £1,000,000 on the telegraph business last year; and whether he will now consider the advisability of appointing a Committee of business men to inquire into the cause of this loss on the telegraph service of the country.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The loss to which my hon. friend refers is made up of £651,880, the balance of expenditure over receipts for the year, and

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† See page 927.

£298,860, the interest of the telegraph capital expenditure of £10,867,644. The reasons for the loss are well known, and I do not think any useful purpose would be served by the appointment of a Committee of Enquiry.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: What are the reasons for the loss?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The public, through its representatives in this House, has preferred to get a return for its money in the shape of greater facilities rather than in revenue. Consequently we are doing business at a loss.

Sandhurst College and Old Dean Common.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W): I beg to ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether he will take steps to prevent any further portion of the Crown land known as Old Dean Common, between Bagshot and Camberley, being built over, in view of its value for the instruction in surveying of Sandhurst cadets and officers at the Staff College, and for other military purposes.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HAYES FISHER, Fulham): I explained the circumstances of this case at some length in an answer to a Parliamentary Question on 18th December last.* I presume that the hon. and gallant Member refers only to the strip of land half a mile in depth which borders on the Bagshot Road. This land is of considerable value for building, and no representations have been made to me by the War Office against its use for this purpose. Should the Secretary of State require more land for military purposes, the Commissioners of Woods could let to the War Office a large area in addition to what they will still hold under the lease that has been granted. The hon. and gallant Member has therefore no ground for his apprehensions.

Campden Hill—Open Spaces.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether his attention has been called to the proposed sale for building purposes of the open space of land at the west of Kensington Gardens, facing the Barracks, lying in front of Church Street, and adjacent to the densely populated neighbourhood of Campden Hill; and whether he will consider the advisability of taking steps to prevent this sale.

MR. HAYES FISHER: I am not quite clear what is the property referred to. Perhaps the hon. Member will communicate with me privately and put down the Question again later, if necessary.

Ventilation in the House of Commons.

*MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether, in view of the present state of the weather, he will take steps to prevent draughts of cold air being forced into the Library of the House of Commons.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): The First Commissioner has made inquiry on this matter, and is assured that the currents of cold air referred to by my hon. friend are not connected with the ventilating system. They are most probably forced into the rooms from the open air by the pressure of the recent heavy winds, and cannot, it is feared, in such circumstances be prevented.

*MR. LUCAS: I can assure my hon. friend that the draughts come from the ventilators round the bottom of the room.

Belfast Revision.

*MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he has had an opportunity of considering the decision of one of the Revising Barristers for Belfast that sub-tenants of rooms in dwelling houses are entitled to the householders franchise; and whether he will introduce a Bill for the purpose of making it clear that such sub-tenants are merely entitled to the lodger franchise.

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* See (4) *Debates*, cxvi., 1635.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry N): The Revising Barrister, in the instance mentioned, decided upon the facts of the particular case that the claimant occupied the upper portion of the house in which he lived as a separate dwelling; that his occupation and control were exclusive; and that the landlord who lived on the ground floor exercised no control. The Court of Appeal decided that there was evidence to sustain that finding, Lord Justice FitzGibbon intimating his opinion that the conclusion of the Revising Barrister was, on the evidence, right. The decision of the Revising Barrister was not of the general nature or effect indicated in the Question. It is in conformity with earlier decisions, and no amendment of the law seems to be called for.

St. Louis Exposition—Irish Exhibits.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Irish Government intend to take any steps, and, if so, what, to have Irish industries represented at the forthcoming St. Louis Exposition.

MR. WYNDHAM: This matter is engaging the consideration of the Government. At present, I am not in a position to make any further statement.

Irish Land Commission Rent Reductions.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland the average amount of rent reduction sanctioned by the Irish Land Commission for the first-term and second-term rents respectively; whether the whole of the holdings revised the first time have been revised the second time; and what proportion such holdings form to the total rent acreage of Ireland.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Annual Reports of the Land Commissioners contain appendices showing the effect of second-term rent fixing on first-term rents year by year since second-term rent fixing commenced in 1896. The appendices distinguish first-term rent fixing from 1881 to the present. Roughly speaking, something less than one-third of the rents fixed for a first term have been revised for a second term. The total rent acreage of Ireland is not known.

Land Purchase Acts Return.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he can grant the Return relative to Land Purchase Acts (Ireland) standing on to-day's Paper.

MR. WYNDHAM: The information under the first, third and fourth headings can be given. With respect, however, to the second, the official records do not distinguish the average number of years purchase on first and second term rents, respectively. Many holdings have been sold that are not subject to judicial rents, and the averages shown in the published Reports of the Land Commissioners are calculated without reference to the nature of the rent. I propose to lay on the Table some Papers on the subject of Land Purchase operations, and will include amongst these statistical information on the matters to which the hon. Member alludes.

MR. LAMBERT: Will the Papers be laid before the introduction of the Land Bill?

MR. WYNDHAM: I should prefer to lay them on the day of the introduction. I wish to have a virgin field for my own efforts.

[Appended is the Return referred to in the Question.]

MR. LAMBERT,—Land Purchase Acts (Ireland): Return showing (1) the total acreage of Irish land sold to tenants under the Purchase Acts; (2) the average number of years purchase paid on the first term and second term rents; (3) the total amount advanced; and (4) the number of tenants to whom advances have been made.

Chaffpool Police Huts.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that there is a canteen attached to the police protection hut at Chaffpool, county Sligo, where persons of all ages can obtain porter at all hours, day and night; and will he state what steps the authorities propose to take in the matter.

Mr. WYNDHAM: A canteen store is attached to the police station at Chaffpool for the purpose of supplying the police and other persons in the locality who have experienced difficulty in obtaining necessaries. The canteen is duly licensed, and there has been no infringement of the law as suggested.

Mr. O'DOWD: I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, will he state the number of police huts erected in the townlands of Chaffpool, Achonry, and Letrim, in the rural district of Tubbercurry, county Sligo, with the number of police stationed therein; what portion, if any, of the cost incurred will be chargeable on the people of these localities; and whether there is any present intention on the part of the authorities to have these huts and extra police removed.

Mr. WYNDHAM: There are four huts in this area, occupied by an officer and seventeen men. The cost to the district in respect of the force is at the rate of £516 per annum. I hope the condition of affairs in the district will soon justify the withdrawal of the extra police.

Inch Strand, Kerry—Foreshore Rights.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the promised inquiry has been held regarding the high-water line at Inch Strand, county Kerry; and, if so, will he state the result.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: In reply to a question by the hon. Member on 27th October,* I stated that the Board of Trade had received complaints that the owner of the adjoining land had erected posts upon the beach which were said to interfere with the use of the foreshore at Inch Strand. From inquiries which have since been made at my request by the Navigating Officer of H.M.S. "Collingwood" it appears that the posts are above the high-water line of ordinary spring tides, and in these circumstances the Board of Trade have no jurisdiction in the matter.

Post Office and the Irish Language.

Mr. CREAN (Cork, S. E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that an official in the Kinsale Post Office refused a parcel because the address on the parcel was in Irish; and whether, seeing that the official in question admitted that he knew Irish and could make out the destination of the parcel, such conduct of officials has the sanction of the Post Office authorities.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The official to whom the parcel to which the hon. Member refers was tendered, states that she could not decipher the address with any certainty, and in these circumstances she was justified in refusing to accept the parcel.

Mr. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman in future take steps to appoint to the Post Office only those who can read Irish?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir, I must decline to do that. I do not think it right to exclude from the Post Office services officials who cannot read Irish.

Mr. CREAN: Did not this official admit that she understood the address?

Mr. O'DONNELL: Is it not the fact that in Wales——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The general question cannot be argued on a Question raising a specific case.

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that owing to the strong feeling in Ireland that some facilities should be given in the Post Office——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Committee of Defence.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that no opportunity will be given, on a specific Vote or otherwise, to discuss the composition or functions of the new Committee of Defence, he will consider the advisability of proposing an alteration in the Rules of this House which would make the discussion of Imperial Defence as a whole, and the relative needs of the two services, in order on the Army or Navy Estimates, or will provide some definite opportunity other than on the Budget when such discussion would be permissible.

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* See (4) *Debates*, cxiii., 826.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): My hon. friend is no doubt aware that I have answered the most important parts of this Question a few days ago. Of course I am open to having questions put to me in the House as to the constitution of the Defence Committee, and I shall be glad to answer them to the best of my ability. But at present I do not think it would be advisable to devote one or two days of the session to a discussion of all the delicate international questions which must arise if we are to discuss strategy at large. I should be sorry to commit myself further at present.

Chilian and Argentine Battleships.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury are His Majesty's Government aware that, by the Convention ratified on 22nd September, 1902, Chili and the Argentine Republic undertake to reduce their fleets within one year from that date, and that consequently two first class battleships of the latest type, costing together about £2,200,000, and recently launched by Messrs. Vickers and Messrs. Armstrong, respectively, are now for sale; have His Majesty's Government considered the change in the present proportion of foreign navies to that of Great Britain which would result from the acquisition of these ships by a Foreign Power; if so, what steps do they propose to take to prevent the consequent diminution in the relative strength of the British Navy.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The important point to which the hon. Member calls attention has been considered—and carefully considered—by the Admiralty; and they have clearly come to the opinion that the ships which are for sale are not suitable for their purposes, and that it would not be advisable to buy them.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Is it not the fact that they are much superior to any ships of our own Navy?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is not the Admiralty view.

NEW WRIT.

For the borough of Woolwich, in the room of Vice-Admiral Charles William de la Poer Beresford, commonly called Lord Charles Beresford (Manor of Northstead).—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*)

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Thomas Ryburn Buchanan, esquire, for the county of Perth (Eastern Division).

SHOPS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1897) AMENDMENT BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Friday 8th May read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

NEW BILLS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (TRANSFER OF POWERS) BILL.

"To amend Section 10 of the Local Government Act, 1888," presented by Mr. Long; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 65.]

TRADE DISPUTES ARBITRATION BILL.

"To provide for Arbitration in Trade Disputes," presented by Mr. Nannetti; supported by Mr. Joyce, Mr. Sheehan, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Keir Hardie, and Mr. E. Crean; to be read a second time upon Friday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 66.]

THE GALWAY VACANCY.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): I rise to move the Motion that stands in my name, "That Mr. Speaker do issue his warrant to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland to make out a new writ for the election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the city of Galway, in the room of Arthur Alfred Lynch, adjudged guilty of high treason." The effect of the judgment in this case is a matter of notoriety, and the House has now before it the record of the proceedings stating what was the form of the indictment, what was the judgment of the Court, and what has been done with regard to the commutation of the sentence There is no doubt whatever that this judgment operates to disqualify the person in question from sitting in this House. In past days there has sometimes been a debate on that subject, but all doubt is removed by the terms of the Forfeiture Act passed in 1870, which provides expressly that such a judgment shall operate as a disqualification from sitting in this House. In a matter of so much importance hon. Members will perhaps desire that I should read the words of the Act. The section runs—

> "If any person is convicted of treason or felony for which he is sentenced to death or penal servitude, or any term of imprisonment with hard labour exceeding twelve months, he becomes, and until he has suffered the punishment to which he is sentenced or such other punishment as he may be subjected to by the competent authorities, or receives a free pardon from the Crown, he continues, incapable of being elected to, or sitting, or voting, in either House of Parliament."

That express enactment renders it quite unnecessary for the House to pass any resolution stating that that is the effect of the judgment. Before that Act the practice had been established of having a resolution declaring that the judgment had the effect of disqualifying the person in question, and that practice survived in several cases after the statute of 1870; but I think the House will agree with me that in face of this express enactment it is absolutely unnecessary to pass any resolution. That is a matter of clear law, and the only question that remains is, what shall be done with reference to the vacancy in Galway, which has been so created? Notice of opposition to this Motion has been given by the hon. Member for North Islington. I am not surprised that there should be in some parts of the House a feeling such as finds expression in the Amendment. There is naturally a very strong feeling of resentment at what occurred in connection with this return to serve in the House, for at the time when Arthur Alfred Lynch was elected to serve in Parliament, it was notorious that he was in arms against the Crown. And that being so, I do not think anyone can be surprised at there being a strong desire to inflict some penalty on the constituency that chose to return such a Member of Parliament. I quite appreciate the reasons which have led the hon. Member to give his notice, but I hope that in this matter the House will be guided by precedent and principle. It might be a very dangerous thing indeed if a precedent were set of disfranchising a constituency because it returned to the House of Commons a person whose views or whose conduct were obnoxious —and most justly obnoxious—to the views of the majority of the House. Such a principle, if once introduced, might lead to very startling applications.

The present case, no doubt, is a very extreme one. It has been said that hard cases make bad laws. However that may be, extreme cases may very easily lead to the establishment of very dangerous principles, which in their application in other cases may be very much to be regretted. There is a certain class of cases in which the House has been in the habit of suspending the issue of a writ. It will be found on examination that these are cases in which there has been in the constituency very general bribery and corruption, where inquiry was desirable and was about to be instituted, and where it was very probable that matters might end in the total disfranchisement of the constituency as a punishment for the practices which had been very generally prevalent there. There is the well-known case of the Mayo election, where intimidation had very largely existed, and in that case the House directed the prosecution of several persons and suspended the issue of the writ during the then present session. That was a very natural course to take, and it was a course which might have the effect of enabling the constituency to recover from those influences which, according to the result of the inquiry, appeared so extensively to have been brought to bear upon it. The present, however, is a very different case from those in which the writs have been suspended. There are precedents with regard to it, and the chain of precedents is unbroken in showing that in such circumstances as the present the issue of a writ ought not to be suspended by way of a punishment to the constituency. There have been five cases, beginning with the year 1849, and coming down to the year 1895, in which this question has arisen, under circumstances similar to the present. There was in 1849 the case of Mr. Smith O'Brien, who was Member for Limerick; in 1870 the case of O'Donovan Rossa, who was Member for Tipperary; in 1875 the case of Mr. John Mitchell, who was also Member for Tipperary; in 1882 the case of Mr. Davitt, Member for Meath; and in 1895 the case of Mr. Daly, Member for Limerick. In not one of those cases was the issue of the writ suspended in terms similar to those of the Motion of which my hon. friend has given notice, and it will be found on examination that in almost all the cases the proceedings necessary to fill up the vacancy were taken by the Government of the day.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Not in the last case.

Sir ROBERT FINLAY: I said "in almost all the cases." In 1849 there occurred the case of Mr. Smith O'Brien, which in some respects is most nearly analogous to the present case, because he was a Member of the House before the conviction for high treason took place. His punishment was commuted to transportation, and under these circumstances the Leader of the House, Lord John Russell, moved a Resolution that he was disqualified, and moved the issue of the writ to fill up the vacancy. It may be said by my hon. friend that in that case there is nothing to show how far the constituency were in sympathy with the views of Mr. Smith O'Brien when they returned him to Parliament. I do not know how that stands, and, at this distance of time, I dare say it would not be quite easy to ascertain.

My hon. friend may say that that is not a sufficient reason for proceeding as Lord John Russell did. There are four other cases which really present stronger grounds for suspending the issue of a writ than the case of Galway now before the House, because in every one of these cases the Member was returned to Parliament when he was actually a convict; and yet not in one of these cases was the issue of the writ suspended, and in most of them the necessary proceedings were taken by the Government for filling up the places. In 1870 O'Donovan Rossa was returned to the House. The Motion that he was disqualified for sitting in the House, and the Motion that a new writ do issue, was made by the Leader of the House, Mr. Gladstone. In 1875, Mr. John Mitchell, being then a convict, was returned to the House by Tipperary. He had been convicted of treason felony in 1848, but had escaped before his sentence had expired, and in 1875 he was returned to Parliament. Mr. Disraeli, who was then Leader of the House, moved the Resolution, and it would appear, though I do not think it is expressly stated, that Mr. Disraeli also moved the issue of the writ. In 1882 Mr. Davitt was returned for Meath. He had been convicted of treason felony in 1870, and was under a sentence of penal servitude for fifteen years. When he was returned in 1882, being then a convict whose sentence had not expired, the Attorney General of the day, now Lord James of Hereford, put down upon the Paper of the House two Resolutions. The first Resolution was that Mr. Davitt was disqualified for sitting in the House, and that was carried on a division upon the Motion of the Attorney General. The other Resolution which the Attorney General put down was that a writ should issue to fill the vacancy. He did not move it for the reason that a claim was made for the seat, and it was not desirable that anything should be done until that matter had been disposed of. That took place in February, and the writ was not moved then for the reason I have stated. It appears to have been moved in the Parliament following, and I am told that it was moved by a Member of the Irish Party, but it does not appear to have met with any opposition, and was issued.

The last case is that which occurred in 1895, when Mr. Daly was returned for Limerick. He had been convicted of treason felony in 1884, and his sentence being unexpired, he was returned to Parliament in 1895. The Attorney General, now the Lord Chief Justice, moved the Resolution declaring that he was disqualified from sitting in the House. That is the Resolution which I now ask the House to dispense with as being unnecessary. When the Resolution had been carried, the First Lord was asked whether he proposed to move the writ, and replied "Not to-day." The matter stood over, and the Motion was afterwards made by an hon. Member for an Irish constituency, and appears to have passed unopposed, and the writ was issued in the ordinary course. Now, Sir, I submit to the House that the precedents are really unanimous for the writ going in such cases, and that these precedents are based upon sound principles. The precedents also show that the practice has been for the Government to move in this matter, and I apprehend for this reason the members of the Government may be regarded as being charged in some degree with the care of any matter of privilege which may arise. Under these circumstances, I beg to move, Sir, that you, Mr. Speaker, do issue your warrant for the purposes of this writ, and I would ask the House, in deciding upon the matter, not to allow themselves to be carried away by any feeling of resentment, however natural, and I may even say proper, but to be guided in a matter which is of so much importance by precedent and by reason.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland to make out a New Writ for the election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the City of Galway, in the room of Arthur Alfred Lynch, adjudged guilty of high treason."—(*The Attorney General.*)

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY: I am sorry to have to move an Amendment to this Motion, and my Amendment will run in these words: Leave out all the words after "that," and insert "the writ for the City of Galway do not issue during the present session." I think that is a very moderate and mild conclusion, and I hope that what I shall have the honour of saying will convince many hon. Members that this is a reasonable step to take. I do not quite understand why the Government should act as they have done in pressing this matter forward. Although I am not a great believer in precedents, and do not think they should always be followed, it is clear from the precedents in this matter that it has not been the universal practice for the Government to move the writ. Under present circumstances, if it had been left to the Whips of the Irish Party, it would not have been a matter for the Government, and hon. Members on this side would have voted without the tie of Party allegiance, and without following the Party Whip. I regret that this course has been taken, because the reason is obvious, but nevertheless I think it my duty to bring the matter forward, and challenge a division upon the subject. I shall endeavour to show that this is an altogether unprecedented case, that we have never had a similar one, and the reasons I shall give ought to be reasons for suspending the writ.

There have been many occasions on which a writ has been delayed in issuing, for as recently as 1901 an hon. Member moved that a writ should be withheld in the case of Maidstone. The reason for this was that it was considered that the borough was corrupt, twenty-five persons having been proved guilty of corruption, and eleven having been bribed. I spoke on that occasion and voted for the Resolution for delaying the writ, because I thought it should be delayed. I only refer to this question to show that it has been the practice in many other cases, and I also bring it forward to show the reason why the writ was there suspended. It was suspended because twenty or forty persons had been proved to be corrupt in that district, and although that was a proper case, I shall show that the offence was a comparatively small one compared with the offence in Galway. The same thing happened in Nottingham and Norwich in 1848, when the writ for a similar offence—corruption—was suspended for five years; and therefore it is quite clear from the precedents that this House has the power, and has exercised it, of suspending a writ when it thinks proper, and suspending a writ even for a period of five years.

It is clear from the Attorney General's speech that it is not unprecedented for hon. Members of this House to be guilty of treason. There have been several cases, and we are all very sorry for it. The last case was Daly's, which the Attorney General has referred to, and in that case the Government did not take any action, but left it to the ordinary channels for the moving of the writ; but the case which is most in common is that of 1849, when William Smith O'Brien was expelled the House; and before that there was another case in 1715, when a Mr. Foster was expelled as a traitor. In both these cases, it is true — and certainly in Mr. Smith O Brien's case—the Leader of the House did move the writ, but the case I shall try and make out is that this instance of Galway differs, because the constituency knew the facts before the hon. Member was elected. In all these former cases this was not so. The Smith O'Brien case rests most on all fours, but he became a traitor after he had been elected.

In Galway the so-called "Colonel" Lynch was elected by a constituency because they knew he was a traitor, and they voted for him because he was a traitor. This was advertised and known, as I shall show by quotations. It was known at the time that he was fighting against the King's soldiers, and it was for that reason that he was elected. I have shown, and I think it is obvious, that we have the right to suspend the writ; and I say distinctly that if we have the right to suspend it because a few persons in a district are guilty of bribery and corruption, most emphatically it is our duty to do so in a district and borough where there has been wholesale treason in returning a Member. Now, Sir, what are the facts? They are these: Arthur Lynch was returned for Galway; he was tried and found guilty of high treason for fighting for the enemies of this country, firing at, and doing all he could to kill our own soldiers our sons and brothers, he was condemned to death, but the Royal clemency has been given to him, and the sentence of death has been reduced to penal servitude for life. It may be that the constituency were unaware of these facts It may be that he might have become a traitor afterwards, but I shall read from quotations to show that this was not the case in Galway. As a matter of fact, a great number of the electors there knew what Colonel Lynch was doing, and they not only knew this but gloried in it, and made boast of it, and a constituency that does this certainly should be treated as severely as constituencies were treated where there was a certain amount of corruption and bribery.

Now, the way to prove that will be to read extracts from the local newspapers and from the speeches delivered at the time. I do not wish to delay the House long, but I must just read a few of these quotations. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford, for instance, telegraphed that he hoped the electors of Galway would haul down the blood-stained banner of England, and hoist that of a free nationality.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I was in America at the time.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY: It is all very well to laugh at these things, and it is all very well for the hon. Member for Waterford to say he was in America —we have heard these things before.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: The hon. Gentleman misunderstands me. I said I was in America, and I took no part in the election. I indeed sent a telegram from America, but it was in no such words as those.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY: I will read the words. The hon. Gentleman will not dispute that he telegraphed the words which were published—that he wished Colonel Lynch (the soldier of freedom) might be elected.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: No; I never telegraphed such words.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Where did you get them?

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY: I have often noticed this course taken when these things are brought up. I will read the extracts from the Irish papers, and perhaps what they contain will conclusively show that my statement is correct.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Really, Mr. Speaker, I must intervene, I think, on the issue that has been raised. What I said is of very little importance; but as I have contradicted the statement, and as the hon. Gentleman has not accepted my contradiction, I ask you, Sir, as a matter of order, if the hon. Gentleman is not bound to accept my disclaimer of those words.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for North Islington was going beyond the Rules of Order in saying after the contradiction of the hon. Member, that such statements were often made. The hon. Member should withdraw that remark.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY: I do not wish to say anything that is not courteous or respectful to the hon. Member, but I will read various quotations which I have, and, if the hon. Member disputes them, of course I will withdraw.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member withdraw the statement which seemed to imply that the hon. Member for Waterford had wilfully denied the use of words which he actually did use?

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY: I beg pardon. I did not mean my words to have any such application.

*Mr. SPEAKER said if the hon. Member said he did not mean his words to have any such application, that was quite enough.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: It is of no consequence. Go on.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY: I shall give the various quotations as I have them here. The *Galway Observer*, in an article on 26th October, said—

> "Colonel Arthur Lynch . . . acted as war correspondent for *Le Journal* in the Transvaal. He abandoned the pen for the sword, and raised and commanded the so-called Second Irish Brigade on the Boer side."

That was the reason why the paper strongly urged the electors to support him. I say that is conclusive evidence that the electors knew what they were doing. The Irish *Daily Independent and Nation*, on 13th November, said—

> "Colonel Lynch it will be remembered fought with the Boers in the South African War, and it is believed that if he landed in Ireland there is a probability of his being at once placed under arrest for high treason."

That is a clear indication that that newspaper knew that he was an offender, and I say emphatically that it was known in the district that he was acting in that way. The *Galway Observer*, on 26th October, said in reference to Colonel Lynch—

> "He is quite eligible for a seat in Parliament, notwithstanding his being in arms against the forces of the King in South Africa."

That shows again it was common knowledge in the district where the election was going on. The *Freeman's Journal* on 18th November published a telegram sent to the hon. Member for East Mayo by the hon. Member for Waterford and others. It contained these words—

> "We call upon the people of Galway to strike a blow for Irish freedom by electing triumphantly the Nationalist candidate, the soldier of freedom, Colonel Arthur Lynch."

These are the words on which I based the statement I made just now.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: The words I objected to were some reference to a blood-stained flag.

Sir G. BARTLEY: I, of course, do not want to repeat that. [An Irish Member: "Because you can't."] The hon. Member for East Clare, speaking at a meeting at Galway on 18th November, is reported in the *Freeman's Journal* to have said that—

> "Colonel Lynch could not come to Galway because there was a price upon his head, but if he was made M.P. for Galway the British Government would not dare to lay hands on him."

That shows that the action of Colonel Lynch was known distinctly and emphatically to the electorate. The *Freeman's Journal* reported a meeting addressed by Mr. Davitt on the previous day at the Court Theatre, Galway. Mr. Davitt said—

> "What was the case of Colonel Lynch? They knew that he fought as gallantly and loyally for the Boers as Major MacBride. A convention was called in Galway and Colonel Lynch's name, with his consent, was placed before it and he was unanimously adopted as the Nationalist candidate."

There were two men, Major MacBride and Colonel Lynch, and there appeared to be a competition as to who had been most active on behalf of the enemies of this country. There was a competition as to which had been the greatest traitor. I say that is conclusive proof that the electorate of Galway knew emphatically what was going on. The *Freeman's Journal*, in a leading article on November 22nd said—

> "Colonel Lynch, the soldier of Boer liberty, has been returned. . . . Those who have never heard of Mr. Plunkett will hear that Galway, an Irish constituency, has elected to the British House of Commons a Member whose chief claim upon it is that he defended Boer independence against unscrupulous British aggression."

I have an extract from the *Galway Express*, which I believe is a Unionist paper. In an article on November 30th it said—

> "Mr. Lynch . . . cannot under existing conditions sit. He is, by the account of his own supporters, a rebel who joined himself unto the Boers, and bore arms against the British empire and its Sovereign."

The *Freeman's Journal* of November 26th contained a telegram reporting a meeting held at Chicago at which the hon. Member for Waterford said—

> "When the Irish wanted to send a Member to represent them in Parliament they picked out a Colonel who had fought for the Boers."

That shows conclusively that they did know it, and acted accordingly. After the election, the *Galway Observer* states—

> "A meeting of the Letterfrack Branch of the United Irish League was held on 24th November, at which Mr. Valleby proposed the following resolution: 'That we, members of the Letterfrack Branch of the United Irish League, hail with delight the result of the Galway election, and the return of Colonel Arthur Lynch, who fought against British tyranny and for the freedom of the South African Republics.'"

That resolution was passed unanimously by the meeting. It seems to me an extraordinary thing that a writ should be issued for the return of another Member by this constituency which voted for a man because he was a traitor and fighting against the King's troops. Hon. Members opposite, I think, will not dispute the statement that he was elected because he was fighting against the King's troops. I do not think that there is any indication that they regret it. I do not think anyone will get up and say that it is a fact that they do regret it. Mr. Lynch was returned by a large majority, and therefore I appeal to the House—I appeal to those who objected to the war, for the origin of war has nothing to do with it—to disfranchise the constituency. If we disfranchise a constituency for five years because they are corrupt, surely it stands to reason that we should disfranchise a constituency when we find that they are steeped in treason, when we know that they are glorying in their treason, and when we know perfectly well that at the present moment they do not regret or repent what they did. I do feel, even if the precedents are against us, even if the precedents show that the Government should move, that this is an exceptional case, because the same circumstances never occurred before. I protest against the Government having taken the initiative in this case, and beg to move the omission of all the words after "That," in order to insert "the writ for the city of Galway be not issued during the present Session."

*MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): In rising to second the Amendment I act with a full sense of responsibility, and I hope that hon. Gentlemen opposite in general, and Irish Members in particular, will believe me when I say that under similar circumstances I should be prepared, nay, I should have felt it my duty, in similar circumstances to take a similar course in resisting the issue of a writ to any constituency in the United Kingdom. Until the other day we had all been under the impression that the ordinary course of procedure would have been followed and that the Irish Parliamentary Whips would have moved for this writ, but since then the excavation of some Parliamentary precedent has apparently entailed on the Government the necessity of bringing this Motion forward in the House. I think from the Attorney General's speech that it is his duty rather than his desire to move this writ, and that he is impelled thereto by tradition only. I hope that the Attorney General, having done so, the House of Commons will be permitted, without the assistance of the crack of the Party Whip, to take its own line in this matter. I confess that this new procedure has rather astonished me, for I never should have thought that those who in 1901 at Blenheim Palace delivered speeches which, if they meant anything, foreshadowed an early curtailment of Irish representation on account of the hostile attitude of Irish Members during the war, would have brought forward such a Motion. The phrase "toy shop treason" is present to the minds of us all; yet the colleague of the right hon. Gentleman who used this phrase is the first to ask the House to enable Galway to repeat its deliberate choice in lieu of a man whose treason at any rate was not "toy shop," and, with the same degree of sincerity with which the Irish leaders—or, perhaps, I should now say leader-writers—recommended Mr. Lynch to the electors of Galway on account of his hostile attitude toward this Empire.

I beg the House of Commons to deny to a constituency amenable to such influences the exercise of the highest privilege of citizenship. This is the first notice which the House of Commons has taken of this act of treason. Indeed we make more fuss about a breach of our ordinary Standing Orders than we have made of this man's treason. Mr. Lynch, since 1900, has never passed the portals of this House as Member for Galway. He has never taken the oath of allegiance at that box; since he came to these shores he has been treated as an ordinary citizen of the country, charged with a high misdemeanour. There has been no Motion for his expulsion. The House of Commons has done nothing but register the condemnation passed on Mr. Lynch by a Court of Justice, and has had no opportunity until this moment of giving its opinion of Mr. Lynch or of the constituency which elected him. It might be at some future date, in some dark day in our country's history, that not one man, but several men, might be returned by disloyal constituencies, and the House of Commons would be defenceless then, if the present procedure were followed, from doing anything but register the decree of the Court and then proceed to the risk of taking to its own bosom other men who are guilty of an equally bald but perhaps less brave form of treason. It is unnecessary to inform the House that we harbour no vindictiveness against Mr. Lynch. We believe, indeed, that he is a good deal braver man than many of those who share his opinions. We are jealous of the dignity and the honour of the House of Commons; and we are jealous lest, by allowing this writ to go without protest, we should prove ourselves guilty, in the words of the Lord Chief Justice, of the crime of "belittling treason." For ages past it has been our proud boast that England is the freest of countries in the whole world; but even we have never laid it down as a sound constitutional maxim that we should allow people to do what they choose until we find out what they choose to do; and if, in the exercise of their duty, the people of Galway, or any other constituency, choose to elect men like Mr. Lynch, then I say, for the sake of the dignity of the House, and also for the security of the loyalists throughout this country and the Empire, that the Government ought to waive this antiquated tradition which they have recalled into existence, and to alter, if necessary, the existing law of the country. They ought to offer difficulties and not facilities in the way of issuing this writ for Galway, and in this way, and this way only, which the words of the Colonial Secretary will prove to be just and true, "that the nation is taking note of these proceedings and expects that the Mother of Parliaments will know how to defend her self."

Amendment proposed, "To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'no Writ for the City of Galway be issued in this present Session.'"—(*Sir George Bartley.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): The House has listened, not only with great attention but with interest to the wise words of the representative of His Majesty's Government in moving the Resolution on the Paper. Mr. Gladstone expressed similar opinions in this House some years ago. There might be some truth in what had been said by the mover and seconder of the Amendment, but I rather prefer the views and to follow the lead of the Attorney General. Of course we know what is at the bottom of this Amendment; but it is only two or three nights ago that all those things were being said about the Secretary of State for War which are now being said of the constituency of Galway. Well, the right hon. Gentleman was not exactly accused of treason, but of wasting His Majesty's money, and I do not know which is worse. I would point out to the aspiring gentlemen who sit below the gangway that it is the opinion of the Attorney General that all sorts of constituencies should be represented in this House. The mover of the Amendment is a very good party man; and we all congratulate the hon. Member for Islington North on his late accession to dignity. We all welcome his promotion, but I would suggest that the hon. Gentleman is going a little too far in moving to disfranchise the constituency of Galway, which, after all, may be Conservative. The hon. Gentleman is not following the rules of the game by attacking the referee who has given a decision against him. I happened to be in Galway during the election, not taking part in it, but because I was obliged to be in the town for a meeting of the County Council, and am therefore better informed on the facts than the hon. Gentleman whose quotations were misleading. We all know that the hon. Gentleman does not always get good information, but then we are all liable to make mistakes. I was surprised at some of the omissions made both by the mover and seconder of the Amendment. They talked as if Mr. Lynch was a man absolutely unknown to the burgh of Galway.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY: No.

COLONEL NOLAN: At any rate they did by omission, if not by commission. That is fact number one. Another is that the family of Lynch has been very well known in Galway for many generations. They are one of the tribes of Galway, though not of the true Irish tribes; they are Normans. During the election the burgh of Galway was particularly quiet. Taking my information exclusively from Conservative sources, I found that there were from eighty to a hundred Conservative electors—most of them Unionist—yet Lord Killanin polled at the previous election 850 votes, though perhaps he owed a good deal to his name. Now at the last election one of the best known men in Ireland came forward as a Conservative candidate; some said that it was the Conservative Whips who insisted upon it. At any rate, Mr. Horace Plunkett was very well known as having taken the greatest interest in the agriculture of Ireland, and as a man of the highest probity and fairness. On the other hand, Mr. Lynch, whose family was connected with Galway, came forward, everybody on both sides knew, rather as a Home Ruler than as a supporter of the strong principles quoted by the hon. Member for North Islington. But a very curious thing happened. It is believed, I will not say it is a fact, because we cannot see into the ballot-box, but somehow an idea leaked out, that less than sixty Conservatives voted for Mr. Plunkett out of 407 who supported him, so that the Conservatives are just as responsible for the election of Mr. Lynch as the others who voted for him. Mr. Plunkett had been guilty of the iniquity of appointing a Catholic to the Agricultural Department. [Cries of "Oh, oh!"] Well, that is an iniquity in the view of the Conservatives of Ireland. They did not like him. What was the unfortunate elector in Galway to do? Here was a gentleman who was said to have fought against his country; the elector did not know whether he was boasting, or whether he was only a newspaper correspondent. No one was at all certain on the subject.

Again, a great many people did not know whether he had not the right to change his allegiance. Up to about 1854 or 1855, no man could change his allegiance; but since that date it has been enacted that a man can change his allegiance. However, the Lord Chief Justice laid it down, I have no doubt quite properly, that a man cannot change his allegiance during a time of war. But that was absolutely unknown at the time of the Galway election. I can quite understand a Home Rule elector saying, "Here is a doubtful case; yet this candidate is a Home Ruler, and I must vote for him." If the House of Commons disfranchises this constituency it will be departing from the precedents which have been established. The Attorney General pointed out the great danger of such a proceeding; and the simplest thing to do is to accept the guidance which has been given by the Attorney General. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite have done quite enough to advertise themselves. Owing to anti-Irish feeling in the constituencies they will get a great deal of credit and kudos. The mover of the Amendment said that it was not a Party question; but I am too old a Parliamentary bird to be caught in that trap. Of course, it is a Party question. Another point is that there are too few borough Members in Ireland. It is acknowledged on all sides that there ought to be a balance in the representation of borough and rural constituencies; yet it was now proposed to reduce the borough constituencies in Ireland by one. Further, the Conservatives may win the seat, and, on principles of fairness, and in order to allow the constitution of the country to proceed in its usual form, I hope the House of Commons will accept the dictum of the Attorney General, and allow the writ to be issued.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): It appears to me that no reason has been shown why we should depart from the well established practice of issuing a writ in cases of this kind. That practice has been absolutely clear, and was admitted by the hon. Member who seconded the Motion; and the House of Commons would be setting a very dangerous precedent if they were to leave a constituency unrepresented on account of the conduct of its Member, and not because of anything connected with the conduct of the constituency itself. It is clear to me that in this case the Attorney General is right in moving that the writ be issued, and I will, therefore, support the Motion.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): There appears to be two questions raised by the speeches of my hon. friends who have moved and seconded the Amendment. One is a question of procedure, and the other is a question of merit. My hon. friends have asked, with feelings of virtuous indignation, why the writ has been moved from this Bench. That is a question of form, but not an unimportant question of form. I desire to state why I believe that this was the only course open to us. As my hon. friend who moved the Amendment pointed out in an interruption during the speech of the Attorney General, the writ was not moved from this Bench in the case which occurred in 1895. I was at that time First Lord of the Treasury, and my hon. friend appears to think that I then set a new precedent which I ought, in this case, to follow. Let me remind him of the circumstances of 1895. We met to wind up the necessary business of the session, immediately after a stormy General Election. The question was raised on, I think, the very first day of the meeting of the new Parliament; and, so far as I was concerned, I had not then made myself acquainted with the rather elaborate series of precedent to which attention has been called by the Attorney General; and I have no doubt, although my recollection is a little shadowy, that that was the reason why a course was not then taken in accordance with the precedent. The matter was put off for a fortnight, and the writ was then moved without any observation or any opposition. If the matter were to be passed *sub silentio* on this occasion, it appears to me it would be a small matter as to who moved the writ or not; but if the issue of the writ were to be contested, it appeared to us, after a most careful examination of the precedents, that we, as guardians of the Constitution, were bound to take a leading part in the debate, and that the most honest course for us was to move the writ ourselves, and do what our predecessors have so often done from this bench.

So much for the question of form, which is relatively unimportant. What we have to ask ourselves to-day is what course we should pursue, if we wish to preserve inviolate the ancient liberties and traditions of this House, and of the constituencies which this House represents. My hon. friend, in the course of his eloquent peroration, talked about excavating musty precedents, and he appeared to think that he was speaking as the defender of British liberties, and of the ancient forms and practices of this House. As a matter of fact, my hon. friend is a heretic on this occasion, and the heresy of my hon. friend is directed, not against musty precedents, but against precedents many of which have occurred within the memory of hon. Members now listening to me, and only one of which could have occurred before the first birthday of my hon. friend. What are the principles that underlie the action we are taking? First, let me say a word from the historical point of view. I have said that the precedents alluded to by my hon. and learned friend are of recent date. That is true, but the practice of the House is old. Going back to the precedent in which everyone now thinks that the House of Commons of that day took a very high-handed course indeed—I refer to the case of Mr. Wilkes—no one now defends what the House of Commons did in that case. But although the House of Commons declared Mr. Wilkes to be an outlaw and expelled him again and again from this House, and declared him to be incapable of sitting in this House, yet the electors of Middlesex went on electing him to the House of Commons; and, in spite of that, the House of Commons never went the length of endeavouring to disfranchise that constituency. The House of Commons of that day did many things, but even it shrank from disfranchising a constituency on the ground of the character of the man it returned.

I admit, however, that it is on more recent precedents we have to rely; and the most recent precedent afforded a very much stronger case for disfranchisement than the case now before us. I will not go into the case of Smith O'Brien. I agree with the observation of my hon. friend who moved the Amendment that we have no evidence before us to show that the constituency when it elected Smith O'Brien either desired him to be guilty of treason, or anticipated that he would be guilty of treason. I think, therefore, we may put that case aside, so far as the argument which I am now making is concerned. Let the House consider the case of Mr. Mitchell. He was elected twice and was expelled once; and would, of course, have been expelled again had his election been regarded as valid. On both occasions on which he was elected, the constituency electing him knew that he was suffering imprisonment for treason felony. How can we compare a case like this with the case of Mr. Mitchell? His case was incomparably stronger on two grounds; first, because when he was elected he was actually suffering imprisonment; and secondly, because he was elected by the same constituency twice. That precedent occurred when Mr. Disraeli had just been returned to this House at the head of a very strong Conservative majority; and I cannot imagine a precedent which ought to have greater weight with my hon. friends than that. There is another case, in some respects as strong as the case of Mr. Mitchell, but which seems to me in many respects to be stronger. It is the case of Daly, who was a dynamitard. I do not know what scale of guilt my hon. friends observe in this case, but, shocking as is overt treason and crime such as occurred in 1848, it is incomparably less atrocious and less shocking to all civilised and moral feelings than the crime of a dynamitard. Daly was imprisoned for dynamite, and, being elected for a constituency in 1895, it seems to me that the House has a perfectly clear precedent so far as modern cases are concerned, and I do not know what answer can be made to that argument.

In considering the present case, if hon. Gentlemen ask me whether I think that the suspicion that Mr. Lynch had fought against us in South Africa helped or hindered his election in Galway, I have no hesitation in expressing my own personal belief that it assisted Lynch's election, but is it safe for the House to proceed on that kind of interpretation of the facts? My hon. friend has quoted, not Mr. Lynch's address, which, according to my hon. friend, was innocuous and even tedious, but articles from the *Freeman's Journal* and other newspapers, and two speeches delivered in Galway itself. I hope that I shall not be judged by the leading articles which are written about me; and the experience of my hon. friend and other hon. Members must be happier than mine if they wish to be judged by the speeches made on their own platform in their favour. I think it is dangerous ground, and never has that opinion been borne in upon me more strongly than when I heard a phrase from my hon. friend the seconder of the Amendment. My hon. friend expressed a high and generous sentiment. He said that he had no personal feeling against Mr. Lynch, but that there were many others like him. My hon. friend did not say where exactly they were to be found, but he formed his own opinion on the point. My hon. friend said that these men were not only as guilty as Mr. Lynch in the national aspect of his crime, but in their moral turpitude in concealing and doing in a covert manner that which Mr. Lynch had the courage to do openly.

*Mr MALCOLM: I wish I could have used the expressions which my right hon. friend has just put into my mouth. All I said was that Mr. Lynch was a braver man than many who shared his opinions. There was no question of moral turpitude or anything else.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think I do my hon. friend any injustice in putting the matter as I did when he discusses the question of the bravery of Mr Lynch's acts. My hon. friend says there were twenty other persons like Mr Lynch, who only differed from him by being not only traitors, but cowards as well; that if any such had been, or are likely to be, elected by any Irish constituencies, it is manifest that they commit a greater crime than the constituency which elected Mr Lynch, because they elect traitors, who are, in addition, cowards. But are we to exercise our personal judgment, to study leading articles and speeches made on their behalf; are we to form our judgment, not by the action of the court of law, not on the report of two judges, not even on the investigations of a Committee of the House, but on the estimate of the general moral sources of opinion open to us, and then to say that this or that constituency has elected a person most unworthy to sit in the House, and that it should be disfranchised for six months? No, Sir; I say we should remember that we ought not to proceed against a constituency except on well-established facts and upon clear principles. If a man has committed treason, or treason felony, and is suffering for it, there we have a well-established fact—a court of law has decided it—and there can be no doubt, as far as human machinery can arrive at the truth, that the man was guilty. By all means let us say that no such person should be elected; but if we choose to lay down the principle that a constituency which elected such a man is unworthy to be represented, let the House do this elaborately, and in obedience to some principle carefully laid down and accepted by the House. But my hon. friend proposes to go much further. He asks the House to embark on a course in which their deviations from the path of justice are not based on clear principles. When the point is not quite clear, is my hon. friend going to ask the House to discuss leading articles and speeches without any full inquiry of any kind, and then proceed to expel the Member and disfranchise the constituency? I think it would be a risky transaction, and I recommend the House to accept the motion of the Attorney General.

Lord HUGH CECIL (Greenwich): This debate has originated in a question of great Constitutional importance, and although in all its parts it has not been a very great debate, although my right hon. friend has made an exceptionally ingenious case for the course the Government are taking, he has not, experienced dialectician as he is, been able to do more than obscure the true issue which lies before the House. I quite agree it may be said that precedent points to the House taking a rather more indulgent course than has been suggested by my hon. friend. But no precedent exactly deals with a case like that of Galway. Never before has the insult offered to the House been of such a scale and of so notorious and flagrant a character; never before has it been made so much an occasion of boasting and approval by those who applauded, if they did not imitate, the conduct of Mr. Lynch. This fact differentiates it from all precedent. But supposing the case was on all fours with precedent, what is the true argument to be drawn from precedent? It is that the indulgence of the House in the past has been abused. The House has allowed most improper Members to be returned without expressing displeasure, and instead of it passing over as a transient phase it has become the habitual practice, and has increased with passing years. The argument of precedent really tells the other way. It is time to draw the line and to set our faces against criminals or traitors or any person of that class who is notoriously unfit for Membership of the House. I quite agree that the return of the dynamitard is scarcely less insulting; but supposing the House had taken the course recommended in 1895, supposing we had withheld the writ altogether for the rest of the Parliament, would it not have been much better? Would the House not have been spared the election for Galway of which it complains? Should we not have convinced the constituencies who made an improper choice, of the impropriety of returning such representatives, making them suffer for the wrong they tried to do to Parliament? Mr. Lynch might have come to the Table last session, and, according to Mr. Speaker Peel, it would have been impossible to prevent him from taking the oath of allegiance.

Is it to be said that a constituency is competent to send up a rebel—because he is a rebel, in order to outrage the House by taking the oath of allegiance to the Sovereign against whom he has been in revolt? The principle that there is no wrong without a remedy expresses a great truth. There must be a remedy against an outrage so flagrant to the Sovereign of this realm and the dignity of Parliament. This constituency committed a wrong which nearly resulted in a great insult to Parliament, and one which we could not have prevented, and I say that we ought to punish the constituency in order to prevent the danger of a recurrence of such an outrage. What is really at the root of all this is the fact that for too long we have regarded treason as a matter for joke or contempt, and not for serious notice. What was it that induced the Government to press the prosecution against Mr. Lynch? It was not any vindictive feeling against that individual. No doubt much might be said in extenuation of his particular offence; but it was in order to emphasise the gravity of the crime of treason as such, to show that treason must no longer be regarded as a trivial matter which the Government of this country and this House could afford to treat with contempt and pass over. That has been the attitude in the past, but it ought not to be the attitude in the future. The South African War brought home the lesson, amongst others, that treason is a matter of national gravity, and ought to be so treated. What we ask the House of Commons to do to-day is to express in a formal manner its disapproval of the action of a constituency which, beyond a doubt, was an accomplice in an act constituting an approval of treason, and to set up on high the standard of public duty, to be maintained before all the world, that treason is a great national offence. It is not intended to enter into a contest with the constituency. No one proposes that Galway should be disfranchised for ever and ever. All that is proposed is that we should impose on Galway a mark of our disapproval of its action in the matter, and then, as in every other offence, when the punishment has been inflicted and suffered, the offence will have been purged. In defence of a principle in the maintenance of which we believe, we should not hesitate to take the sense of the House.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): What the House is asked to do is not to disfranchise the constituency for ever, but to mark its sense of the breach of trust which has been committed. It is not a punishment, but a mark of disapproval. The right hon. Gentleman says he is the guardian of the Constitution. Yes, but it must not be forgotten that the Government are, in some respects, under a suspicion in this case. The other day, when there was a possibility of the regular forces of the Army on this side proving insufficient, the reserve forces on the Irish Benches, or what I may call the Irish Landwehr, were brought up to save the Government either from disaster or from a moral defeat. What I rose to suggest was simply that on this occasion the Government influence should be withdrawn, and the Government Whips not used, and that the House should thus be allowed to express its unbiassed opinion.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): Personally, I am quite unable to give a vote in support of the attitude of the Government on this occasion. The Member for Galway spoke of playing by the rules of the game. It is by the rules of the game I propose to vote to-day. As I understand the game, the duty is placed upon constituencies to return to this House Members who can with loyalty and good faith take the oath which is administered at the table. As I am convinced that in this case the constituency deliberately returned a Member who could not have taken that oath without perjuring himself, I should, without hesitation, vote for the Amendment.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 248; Noes, 45. (Division List No. 9.)

AYES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blake, Edward
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boland, John
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (*Middx.*)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Channing, Francis Allston
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw H. Athole
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*
Cranborne, Viscount
Crean, Eugene
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crombie, John William
Cross, H. Shepherd (*Bolton*)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cullinan, J.
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Davies, M. Vaughan- (*Cardign*
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duffy, William J.
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Ellis, John Edward
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed:
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Ffrench, Peter
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*)
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Gordon, Maj Evans- (*Tr. Hmlts*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Grant, Corrie
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hain, Edward
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robt. Wm.
Hardie, J. Keir (*Merthyr Tyd*
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashfd*
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (*Bristl, E*
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (*Sheff., B'tside*)
Horner, Frederick William
Horniman, Frederick John
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Johnstone, Heywood
Jones, David B. (*Swansea*)
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Lambert, George
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Law, H. Alex. (*Donegal, W.*)
Lawson, John Grant
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lloyd-George, David
Lockie, John
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lough, Thomas
Lowther, Rt. Hon. Jas. (*Kent*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*

Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lundon, W.
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mitchell, William
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
More, Robt. Jasper (*Shropshire*
Morgan, David J. (*Walth'mstow*
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Murray, RtHnA. Graham (*Bute*
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, South*)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (*Cork*)
O'Brien, Kendal (*Tipperary Mid*
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Connor, James (*Wicklow, W.*
O'Doherty, William
O'Donnell, T. (*Kerry, W.*)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (*Mayo, N.*)
O'Kelly, James (*Roscommon N.*
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Charles M. (*Durham*
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Power, Patrick Joseph
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (*Waterford*
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Ridley, S. Forde (*Bethnal Green*
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rose, Charles Day
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Maj-J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Shackleton, David James
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks*
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, RtHn C. R. (*Northants*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (*Oxf'd Univ*
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glamorgan, E.*
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
Welby, Lt-Col. A. C. E. (*Taunton*
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Fred W. (*Norfolk Mid*
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson, J. W. (*Worcestersh. N.*
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn E. R. (*Bath*
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Baldwin, Alfred
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Beckett, Ernest William
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, T. G. (*Lynn Regis*)
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brassey, Albert
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim S*
Davenport, William Bromley-
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of (*Londondy*
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (*Salop*
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morrison, James Archibald
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (*Stalybridge*
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. Edw J.
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edw. T.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*
Tollemache, Henry James
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York, E. R.*
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir George Bartley and Mr. Malcolm.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, that Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland to make out a New Writ for the election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the City of Galway, in the room of Arthur Alfred Lynch, adjudged guilty of high treason.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1902–3.

CLASS I.

£7,500 (SUPPLEMENTARY), ROYAL PALACES AND MARLBOROUGH HOUSE.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) said that this was the third or the fourth piece in which the estimate for work at Marlborough House had been given to them. He thought it was time that they had a full account of the whole of the expenditure, and he hoped they had now seen the end of it. He understood that some great fault was committed in regard to the original estimate, and he should like to know whose fault it was that this particular work was not done with the main part of the work. It was a most unfortunate thing that this matter should be presented to the House in three pieces. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would not think him unreasonable in asking these questions, because the total amount made up a good round sum.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) asked if he should be in order in referring to Hampton Court Palace.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, that item comes under another Vote.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): When His Majesty gave up residence last March it was determined by the Office of Works to thoroughly overhaul the whole drainage at Marlborough House. The drains in the house were put in something like twenty-five or twenty-six years ago. The Office of Works were unable to begin the work at once, for the reason that there were certain guests expected at the Coronation, and after that event the Shah had to take up his residence there, and therefore nothing could be done up to that time. In addition to that, the Sanitary Inspector of the Board of Works was taken ill and had to leave on the 1st of August, and he was therefore unable to go over and make a thorough report of the drainage until something like the 10th or the 11th of November. When he came back he issued his report, and it is on that report that the Board of Works have acted. I may say now that the whole of the work is almost completed, and the house be ready for occupation in the course of a very short time. I hope that there is an end to expenditure at Marlborough House now, but at the same time the hon. Member will agree with me that it is not easy to find out all that may be required, because there is nearly always something else that requires to be done. The Board of Works have had the thing thoroughly well done, and I hope it will be satisfactory to the occupants of Marlborough House.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) agreed that this was the proper time to have the repairs at Marlborough House done. The only question he wished to ask was whether there had been a contract or not. He thought work of this description ought to be done by contract in order to have it done at a reasonable price.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES said this work had been carried out by the Board of Works under the supervision of their own foreman.

Vote agreed to.

CLASS III.

£20,000 (SUPPLEMENTARY), PRISONS ENGLAND AND WALES.

MR. WHITLEY asked the Home Secretary to give the Committee some information as to the reasons for so substantial an increase on the original Estimate, which was £160,700. He was glad to see from a note at the bottom of the Estimate that the increase was not due to any increase in the number of prisoners, but to the increased cost of food. Although the Committee were aware that food had been at a high price during the current year, they could not see that that reason alone was sufficient to account for the substantial increase now asked.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannanshire, Kinross) asked how much of the increase in the price of food in connection with the prisons was due to the tax placed on corn by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) asked whether there was a large percentage of difference in the price of food, and whether any change had been made in the dietary under Head E. If there had been an alteration in the dietary, that would account for the supplementary estimate.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked whether arrangements were now completed whereby no soldier guilty of a military offence would be incarcerated in the common jails of the country; and also whether there had been any changes made in the method of conveying prisoners from one prison to another; whether, in other words, they were less before the public at a time when the members of the public were about the streets.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) said the increase on the whole Estimate amounted to £20,300, and was made up of the following items:—Victualling £12,800; lighting, water, cleaning etc., £3,500; and escort and conveyance £4,000. The chief increase was for victualling, which had accrued under the new form of dietary. The Committee would remember that two or three years ago there was considerable excitement in that House in regard to the question of the dietary in prisons, and in consequence of the discussion which ensued a Committee was appointed, of which his hon. friend the Member for Ripon was Chairman. Having considered the question, the Committee arranged for a very much better dietary than that hitherto in use. The first complete year's estimate of the cost of this new dietary had undoubtedly been understated, and that was chiefly the cause of the item under the first head. Then greater attention had been paid to lighting for the comfort of the prisoners in their cells and workshops, and greater expense was now incurred for the conveyance of prisoners. There had been a general opinion in the country for some time that the conveyance of prisoners through the open streets under escort was not desirable, and in consequence they were now taken in cabs and other conveyances. His hon. friend the Member for Shoreditch had asked about military prisoners. He was quite aware of the feeling that existed on that matter. In fact they all shared the feeling against allowing soldiers convicted of military offences to be herded with common criminals who wandered from one jail to another. At present, though soldiers had not been entirely removed from the civil prisons, the only men there who would return to the Army were those convicted of ordinary civil offences. The number of military prisoners in the civil prisons was 417. These were entirely prisoners dismissed from the Army or soldiers convicted of civil offences—and in regard to these his hon. friend had no cause of complaint. It was in consequence of the carrying out of the policy recommended in that House in regard to the escort of prisoners, the lighting of prisons, and the better dietary, that the extra charge appeared on the Estimates this year.

Mr. EUGENE WASON asked whether the Home Secretary could answer the question he asked.

*Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS said it was a technical question, and it was very difficult to answer. He himself thought that there was absolutely no extra cost in consequence of the corn duty. He did not think that he could work out in a few minutes in the House the amount they had paid more this year than last year for farinaceous food.

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT said he should like to point out that the note to the Estimate was inaccurate and misleading. He mentioned that, because they had heard a great deal about efficiency and the necessity for conducting Government Departments on business lines. He thought the best way of checking expenditure and arriving at real economy was always to protest and ask the Minister to account for the differences between the original and the revised Estimates. Whenever he was in the House, his contribution in the way of practical efficiency would be in requiring a rigid account of material differences in the Estimates.

*Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) said this increase was so serious that the Committee should look at it in the spirit in which the hon. Gentleman opposite had spoken. The increase in the charge for victualling was one-eighth of the original amount. That was to say, for every £1 estimated there had been £1 2s. 6d. paid. That was pretty nearly the state of things that existed for every working man in the country. For what he formerly paid a sovereign he now paid £1 2s. 6d. That was largely due to the altered conditions of taxation, during the last two years. But that was not an excuse for the under-estimate that had been made in this case. The original estimate was made on a dietary scale carefully prepared and sanctioned by a special committee. That scale was before those responsible for the original estimate, and they ought to have had foresight enough to give an accurate estimate of the actual amount that would be required for victualling the prisons. No business man would conduct his business in this way. It would necessarily lead him into the bankruptcy court. This kind of thing was going on, not only in connection with the Home Office, but in many other Departments, and thus the national expenditure was increasing year by year. He thought they had a right to demand from the Government more foresight, in order that the money of the country might be expended more efficiently than it had been.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.) said no one would argue that the Estimates should not be made up with the greatest care, and with the view of avoiding the waste of public money. But he could not agree with the hon. Gentleman opposite in regard to this particular Estimate. It was well known that in consequence of the alteration which had been made in the dietary of prisons there was bound to be an increase in the cost for food. That was the first year in which the extra diet had been provided, and those who framed the Estimates had had no experience. Therefore it was not by any means strange that the Estimate should have been exceeded as it had been. He thought it must be very difficult for the Department to tell, except by average, how many prisoners there might be, although he was sorry to see that these were increasing in numbers. While he agreed with what the hon. Member for Ilkeston said in regard to the increase in the Estimates for the Public Department generally, yet he thought that in this particular Department it was unfair to attack his right hon. friend, who, of all criminals charged with this particular offence, was possibly the last who ought to be condemned. He did not think his right hon. friend's Department had been very largely responsible for the great increase in the national expenditure. Arising out of the reply made to the hon. Member for Islington, his right hon. friend said that the instructions of the Department now were that, when prisoners were being removed from one gaol to another, they should be removed in cabs, and as far as possible kept out of view of the general public. He had no doubt that these instructions had been given, but they were not carried out in many parts of the country. In his native town of Manchester prisoners could be seen being removed by train and not by cabs, and sometimes even on the top of tramway cars, when being transferred from country districts to the city. This practice was greatly to be deprecated, and he asked his right hon. friend to see that more careful instructions were given as to the removal of such prisoners. There was no excuse for their being removed by train in the middle of the day when it was possible to do so early in the morning, as was done in the Metropolis.

MR. KEARLEY said that when they examined the original Estimate they found that there was already an increase in this particular item of food of £6,500. Now they had a Supplementary Estimate, which they were told arose from the fact of the increase in the dietary. But it occurred to him that when the increase of £6,500 was made last year that increase of dietary was contemplated, and that the paltry provision made brought out the incompetency of the Department. Nobody said that the number of prisoners had increased in proportion to this large increase in the Estimates. Any business house would have allocated the amount of additional expenditure required to a penny piece. What was the reason this was not done? It was stated in the footnote that when the original

Estimates were framed, a reduction was anticipated in the prices of food stuffs generally after the war in South Africa terminated. He should like to know who imagined that the prices of victualling would be reduced at the close of the war. On what data did they work? The commercial conduct of all the Departments was wrong. No Government Department had the most elementary knowledge of what was called "good buying." There was no foresight, or the faintest conception of the principle of "good buying." He had seen it in the Navy Estimates, where money might have been saved if the Government had contracted in advance for the supply of, say, serge, without taking delivery. He wanted to know on what articles the increase of price had taken place. The Government seemed always to be caught by any rise in the market, but never had the advantage of a fall.

MR. FLOWER (Bradford, W.) said that, as his hon. friend the Member for Manchester had pointed out, the spirit of reform had not penetrated to the great provincial centres. So far as the transport of prisoners was concerned there was room for a great deal of reform. He would bring to the notice of his right hon. friend the question of the conveyance of prisoners from Bradford to a neighbouring prison, half a day's journey distant. They were conveyed in the day-time, and the male and female prisoners were placed in the same van. He was sure his right hon. friend deprecated that practice, and he appealed to him to use his influence with the local authorities responsible in the matter to carry out a suitable reform. He did not know whether he would be in order in suggesting to the Home Secretary that it would be well if there were an extension of technical education given to the prisoners.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, that is not a question pertinent to the Vote.

MR. FLOWER: I was afraid I was not in order.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District) said he had to complain of the explanatory Note under the heading of "Victualling." Certainly, the excuse for the underestimate offered by the Home Secretary was not properly expressed in the Note before the Committee. Indeed, he could not understand it. Even supposing this was the only justification put forward by the Department, he felt it very difficult, from an economic point of view, to comprehend how anyone in office should suppose that, at the end of a long war, the prices of food-stuffs would go down. He should have supposed that a study of history and of former Estimates would have shown that the prices of the necessaries of life went up after the close of a great war. It could not be that the mere fact of the cessation of war, and the demands of the victualling yards falling off, would have made so great a difference. It seemed to him that the Note was wholly misleading. He understood, from the point of view of the Home Secretary, that there must have been an underestimate, because the change in the dietary must have been taken into account in framing the original Estimate. Then he came to the note on the Vote for "Escort and Conveyance, £4,000."

> "The continued high number of prisoners, and consequent removals to prevent overcrowding, and heavier claims from local authorities for conveyance of prisoners to prison, account for this excess."

As he understood him, the Home Secretary stated that at the time the original Estimates were framed none of these things were known to the Department. But there had been no change. The words did not even suggest that there had been a greater number of prisoners; the words were, "the continued high number of prisoners." Then the words, 'heavier claims from local authorities," were highly ambiguous. He hoped the Home Secretary would explain the note, which was neither intelligent, logical, nor clear.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said it seemed to him that the explanation offered for the Supplementary Estimate given in the Paper would have to be thrown overboard by the Home Secretary. If the increased expenditure were due to an increased prison population, that was an interesting fact on which he hoped the Home Secretary would give the Committee some information. With reference to the increase in the cost for the conveyance and escort of prisoners, it had not been pointed out that a largely increased sum had already been taken under the head, and that now the Committee was asked to vote twice as much as had been estimated. Was any explanation obtained as to the increase in the prison population? He thought the Home Secretary should throw some light upon that matter. Two of the largest prisons in England were situated in his constituency; and his constituents were bringing to the notice of the Home Secretary certain matters which had excited very great public interest. There had been a great outburst of public feeling with regard to the manner in which executions were carried out in one of the prisons; and his constituents asked that executions should not be carried out locally if they were not carried out with sufficient respect for public feeling. It would be much better that executions should be carried out in some decent place and in such a manner that the melancholy ceremony would not shock public feeling. A notice was posted on the prison door or a black flag was hoisted immediately an execution took place. Such things should, in his opinion, be discontinued; and he hoped that the Home Secretary would give attention to the matter.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY TO THE HOME OFFICE (Mr. COCHRANE, Ayrshire, N.) said that, in answer to his hon. friend, the question as to the travelling of prisoners had received the careful attention of his right hon. friend, and instructions had been issued to the responsible officials to see that every means were taken to secure privacy in order that the prisoners should not be unnecessarily exposed to the public gaze. Care was also taken that they should be removed from the railway termini either in a van or in cabs; and particular instructions were given that while at the railway termini they should, as far as possible, be placed in a separate part of the station, and not be kept standing about. Generally, as far as possible, separate compartments were engaged for them. With reference to the hour at which they should travel, an hon. Member suggested that they should travel in the morning; but it was found that, as a rule, station platforms were more crowded from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m., and instructions had been issued that prisoners should not be brought to a railway terminus between those particular hours, as the congestion of traffic was greater than at a later hour of the day. Every possible means was taken to secure that a prisoner should not be subjected to an unnecessary degree of degradation, and that the public should not suffer. As regarded the cost of travelling, from the 1st of April, 1901, to the 13th of April, 1902, 7,210 prisoners were removed to prevent overcrowding; but during the corresponding period ended last month it was found necessary to remove 8,654, or an increase of 1,444. That accounted for the increased expenditure, though not for the whole increase, as the cost of the greater provision which was made to secure the privacy of prisoners should also be taken into account. Then, as to the details, the increase in the estimate for prisoners' food had arisen from the increased cost in the price of commodities, which was estimated at £5,000. They hoped, however, that the Estimates would be more accurate in future. There was very great difficulty in framing them, owing to the increase in the dietary scale. It was not such an easy matter as hon. Members seemed to think, to estimate for various scales of dietary, as the number of prison threats might be in any particular scale had to be guessed at, and that made it extremely difficult for the first year or two on a new dietary to be exactly accurate. A much closer estimate for subsequent years would, he had no doubt, be framed.

MR. LOUGH asked what about the increase in the number of prisoners?

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS said that there was an increase in the number of prisoners, but they were quite unable to assign any specific cause for it. It was general, and was distributed all over the country. The Prison Commissioners, in their Report, stated that they had endeavoured to ascertain if any local causes existed that would account for it, but they found it was impossible to assign any specific cause for it except the growth of population in large industrial centres. There was not, however, any serious increase of crime; certainly not of serious crime. The Prison Commissioners stated that serious crime, as shown by the number of persons sentenced to imprisonment at Quarter Sessions and Assizes, had fallen from about 37 per 100,000 population for the five years beginning 1880 to about 23 per 100,000 for the year 1902, and the persons imprisoned on summary conviction had similarly fallen from 566 per 100,000 to 489 per 100,000. No doubt there was a considerable increase in the number of prisoners. That increase was distributed all over the country, and was chiefly due to small and petty offences in the large industrial centres, and especially in boroughs where the police supervision had been greatly extended. He did not think himself, and he had been in close communication with the Prison Commissioners on the subject, that there was any serious danger or fear on that score, and he did not think the increase would continue.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT said he understood that the Supplementary Estimate was because of the increased price of food. Now he understood it was because the ingredients were changed.

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS said that undoubtedly there had been an underestimate. He did not conceal that fact, and greatly regretted it. It occurred because they had to estimate for a new dietary on which they could not take an average over a period of years. Moreover, the conditions of the dietary were very changeable, because they might have a certain number in one class one day, and a different number the next day. He had no doubt that, when the new dietary had extended over a longer period, it would be very much more closely estimated. At any rate, he would not be satisfied until they had succeeded in framing a much closer Estimate.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER said he thought the right hon. Gentleman and the hon. Gentleman had very candidly met the arguments that had been advanced. He desired to dwell upon the loose way in which the original Estimates were arrived at. Those brought up last year were inadequate and insufficient. In each of the items in the Supplementary Estimates now before the House they had the same glaring inadequacy. The original Estimate for victualling was £86,200, it was now raised to £99,000, and the extra amount now required was an amount of £12,800. That was the amount required to make good the deficiency in the original estimate, which showed that there must be some serious error on the original calculation. The same thing occurred with regard to the estimate for "lighting, water, cleaning, etc.," in respect to which a further £3,500 was now required. Again in the Estimate for Escorts, etc., an additional £4,000 was asked for. Every one of these items was an illustration of a very loose method of estimating the expenditure, which must result in a loss to the nation.

MR. KEARLEY said, as he understood, this increase had arisen owing to an increase in the price of grain and meat. Would the hon. Gentleman under those circumstances divide the items and say how much was due to the increase in the price of grain and how much to the increase in the price of meat? They had had a very nice definition of the word grain when the corn duties were imposed last year, when grain was held to cover sixty-four articles, and although he did not suggest the whole increase was due to the duty, no doubt it contributed to it. He believed these increases, and the whole tendency towards the increase of the Estimates, were due to the fact that what were practically commercial departments of State were managed by uncommercial men. He believed that all these increases were due to the fact that those who had to purchase these various commodities for the State did not watch the markets.

MR. COCHRANE said he was unable to give the information asked for. He had given the amount of increase in regard to each item, and inasmuch as the total was only some £5,000 or £6,000 he thought it was hardly worth while to go into the matter.

Mr. KEARLEY could not accept the suggestion. If the hon. Gentleman had proper details the Committee was entitled to have them. If he had not—

Mr. COCHRANE: No, I have not.

*Mr. KEARLEY said he would accept the answer, but he thought the hon. Gentleman should have admitted it before, because the Committee would remember that these increases of £5,000 here and £5,000 there went to make up the millions of increase that they were trying to reduce.

Mr. WHITLEY suggested that in the Estimates there should appear an item showing the number of prisoners provided for each year, and the cost per individual for food and these other items. That might surely be done. The Home Office had their own statistics, and it was the first thing a business man would do if he desired to have a check on things of this kind. The increase this year on food alone was actually 25 per cent. upon the cost of twelve months ago, yet so far as he knew the prison population had not increased. That was a serious matter, and it was desirable to know how these unfortunate convicts had managed to eat in a single year 25 per cent. more food than they consumed in previous years. He asked that when Estimates of subsequent years came before the House they should contain the cost per head for the current and the two or three previous years in order that a comparative estimate might be made.

*Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland) drew attention to the fact that this Vote was headed "Prisons in England and the Colonies," and asked whether any prisons were still maintained in the Colonies, and, if so, would the hon. Gentleman state where? If that was only an historic title, a survival from the days of transportation, would the hon. Gentleman see if the Estimate could be altered?

Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS said that although the estimate was headed "Prisons, England and the Colonies" that was merely historic, and he would see what he could do to get it altered.

Mr. COCHRANE said he could give the information asked for from the hon. Member opposite. The cost per head now was £5 5s., as compared with £4 last year.

Vote agreed to

Class VII.

£70,000, INDIAN CORONATION GUESTS.

Vote agreed to.

Class II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,000 be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Salaries and Expenses of certain services transferred from the Mercantile Marine Fund, and other services connected with the Mercantile Marine."

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT called attention to the fact that in this Vote the excess in the revised Estimate over the original amount was rather more than 200 per cent., although this was one of those ordinary matters with regard to which shipping firms were able to obtain very accurate and close estimates. He would like to know the reason of this remarkable difference between the original and the revised Estimates.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said that a supplementary estimate was one which from the very nature of the case required adjustment. The ordinary Estimate was the Estimate provided by the Government to include all the expenditure of the year, and the only possible ground for a supplementary Estimate was that there had been some expense which could not possibly be foreseen. As no Member of the Government competent to answer as to steam launches was present, he moved to report Progress and ask leave to sit again.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY of the TREASURY (Mr. Hayes Fisher, Fulham) regretted that, owing to the rapidity with which this Estimate had been reached, the Minister who had to answer for it was not present. He, as representing the Treasury, had scarcely any opportunity of looking into the matter, and was unable to give any details that were asked for.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said this was a most extraordinary Estimate. The original Estimate for maintenance of steam launches was £530, and they were asked to add to that a sum of £2,000. It seemed to him like midsummer madness. He must persist in his Motion to report Progress and ask leave to sit again.

MR. KEARLEY pointed out that the original Estimate for the two items in question was only £1,200, and as the Committee were now asked to vote a further £2,000 they naturally wanted some details.

As the President of the Board of Trade was now in his place,

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked leave to withdraw his Motion to report progress.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said the supplementary Estimate in this case was nearly double the original Estimate. The question of maintenance was a very small thing in the case of a steam launch, and it was difficult to understand why this sum should be required. It was the duty of Ministers to estimate with moderate accuracy the sums they required for the service of the year, and not to bring forward supplementary estimates unless new circumstances, which could not have been foreseen, arose. No reason whatever had been given for this large additional Vote, and he hoped the Minister responsible would give some explanation.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central), in expressing regret at his absence when the Vote was called on, explained that he made arrangements to be summoned, but those arrangements did not seem to have been successful. The sum in question was required for special repairs. The practice of the Board of Trade in regard to these steam launches was to ask for an amount equivalent to the average of several years. They were not in a position to know whether any special repairs would be required, and it was only within the last two or three months that this expenditure had had to be incurred. In each case the repairs consisted of a new boiler and general overhaul. It would be possible for the Board of Trade to ascertain in each year what important repairs were likely to be required, but, as a matter of fact, experience had shown that if such an estimate were made, a demand would be immediately forthcoming for such repairs. In practice it had been found more economical to take the average, and then, when repairs were actually required, the amount was supplied out of savings previously made.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked whether these were old boilers, or had some unforeseen accident occurred ?

MR. GALLOWAY asked what sort of boilers they were.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR did not suppose they were water-tube boilers, nor was he able to state their age. He believed, however, that they were old ones.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER said the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman was almost as remarkable as the supplementary Estimate. Year after year the Committee had voted £550 for maintenance of steam launches, and now, when there had been two previous opportunities of considering the necessities of this particular case, a demand was suddenly made for an additional amount nearly equal to two years allowance. No private business could be conducted on such lines. The right hon. Gentleman had said that it did not do to anticipate repairs or to estimate for them, because the repairs would then be demanded. That showed loose control and lack of supervision in the Department. A private firm, if it inspected its machinery to see what repairs were required, would take care that unnecessary repairs were not forced upon it. These so-called special repairs could, with a little ordinary foresight, have been provided for in the ordinary estimates of the year.

Mr. KEARLEY said it would be very interesting to know what the steam launches were originally supplied for, because it seemed to him an extraordinary expenditure on two steam launches in one year. The Admiralty had, until quite recently, kept up the pernicious system of spending hundreds of thousands of pounds a year upon old ships which, when they had been fitted out, were found to be absolutely worthless for service. He suggested the case under discussion was an exact reproduction of the same pernicious system. Here were two rickety steam launches, which probably did not cost more than £800 when new. They had gone to the bad simply because, as the President of the Board of Trade had admitted, if they had asked the people how things were going, there would have been a wholesale demand for repairs. That, in his opinion, showed that these vessels were rotten, and required to be cleared out. The Committee were entitled to know the actual condition and age of the boats, what was the cost price, and why it was that this particular Department of the Government was afraid to ask how things were going. It proved incompetency and lack of power to control. He hoped the President of the Board of Trade would reply. He prophesied that the expenditure on the launches for the year was equal to their original cost.

Mr. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham) asked whether the money had been spent, or whether, if it was to be spent shortly, it could not appear in the ordinary estimates of the current year.

Mr GERALD BALFOUR said the money had already been spent. As regards the cost of the boats, he was not able to give the amount off-hand, but he might be able to give full information later on.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 197; Noes, 117. (Division List No. 10.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Allsopp, Hon. George
Ambrose, Robert
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beckett, Ernest William
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, T. G. (*Lynn Regis*)
Brassey, Albert
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt Hn J A (*Glasg.*)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, H. Shepherd (*Bolton*)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R. (*Tr. Haml'ts*
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Jos. C.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (*City of Lond*
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hamilton, Marq. of (*Londondy*
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robt. Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashfd*
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hobhouse, Rt Hn H (*Somrst E*
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (*Sheff., B'tside*)
Horner, Frederick William
Hoult, Joseph

Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Johnstone, Heywood
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.(*Salop*
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockie, John
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W.(*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, William
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robt. Jasper (*Shropshire*
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, RtHnA.Graham(*Bute*
Nolan, Col. JohnP. (*Galway, N.*
O'Doherty, William
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, HnWm. RobertWellesley
Percy, Earl
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, S. Forde(*Bethnal Green*
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks*
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (*Oxf'd Univ*
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir CEH (*Sheffield*
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Welby, Lieut-Cl. ACE (*Taunt'n*
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York, E.R.*
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson, J. W. (*Worcestersh., N.*
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Davies, M. Vaughan- (*Cardign*
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duffy, William J.
Dunn, Sir William
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Saml. T. (*Glamorgan*)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*
Ffrench, Peter
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*)
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Horniman, Frederick John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David B. (*Swansea*)
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Joyce, Michael
Lambert, George
Law, H. Alex. (*Donegal, W.*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Govern, T.
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, Kendal (*Tipp'rary Mid*
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Connor, James (*Wicklow, W.*
O'Donnell, T. (*Kerry, W.*)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (*Mayo, N.*)
O'Kelly, James (*Roscommon, N*
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Charles M. (*Durham*
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (*Waterford*
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, Sir R. Thres. (*Dumfries*
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David Jones
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Smith, Samuel (*Flint*)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, RtHnC.R. (*Northants*
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal

Thomas, Sir A. (*Glamorgan, E*
Thomas, David A. (*Merthyr*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W.R.*
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Walton, John Lawson (*Leeds, S.*
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whiteley, George (*York, W.R.*
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Fred W. (*Norfolk, Mid.*
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Kearley and Mr. Charles Hobhouse.

CLASS V.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £10,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1903, for the expenses in connection with His Majesty's Embassies, Missions, and of Consular Establishments abroad, and other Expenditure chargeable on the Consular Vote."

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON asked the noble Lord if he was not going to give some explanation on this Vote.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBOURNE, Rochester): I am not quite sure what the hon. Gentleman wishes me to explain.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the first heading was £4,000 for special missions and services, and one of those items was for the China Tariff Commission. The second item was £6,000, which was entirely due to telegrams consequent on the state of affairs in the Far East.

*LORD CRANBORNE said the explanation as regarded the special missions was that the extra sum asked for was entirely due to the negotiations with China for the commercial treaty. That treaty was negotiated for at very great length. [AN HON. MEMBER: Why?] Hon. Members who had had any negotiations with China knew that they could not be concluded within a very brief period. There was an inconceivable amount of obstruction, and references had to be made, but he did not think the hon. Gentleman would expect him to account for Chinese delays, because he knew that any Government which negotiated with China had to be prepared for delays. As regarded the telegrams, according to recent rulings of the Chair it had been held that on Supplementary Estimates they were not entitled to discuss the policy which those telegrams covered, and the only question for them was the reason for the extra charge and the responsibility of the Government for not having given the right Estimate to start with. The Committee was quite aware that it was impossible beforehand to tell what the amount of the charge for telegrams would come to. It was always an uncertain quantity, but the system adopted was that a normal sum was fixed upon and put forward in the ordinary main Estimates for the year. If it so happened that the negotiations threw a very much larger charge upon the telegrams, then they had to put matters right in the Supplementary Estimates. Of course the Committee could discuss the whole policy when the main Estimates were submitted, but it would be quite impossible for the Foreign Office, or any other branch of the public service, to enter fully into questions of policy on a Supplementary Estimate.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) did not think the Committee had received a very satisfactory explanation from the noble Lord. He had given the same explanation for this Supplementary Estimate that was given by the President of the Board of Trade for the Estimate just passed, namely, that it was the custom to take an average sum, and not in the least to calculate the expenditure which would be necessary; and then, if it was necessary to spend much more money, to come to Parliament and ask sanction for the additional expenditure. He did not think the way to keep down expenditure was to encourage the Departments to come to the House with Supplementary Estimates. Surely on the subject of China the Committee might have had a little more explanation of the necessity for the increased expenditure than had been given by the noble Lord. The House should have been warned that this treaty was to cost so much—an amount which was perhaps more than it was worth. He hoped that the practice which had obtained during the past two years of presenting these Supplementary Estimates would come to an end, and as a protest against its continuance he begged to move to reduce the Vote £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,900, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Charles Hobhouse.*)

MR. KEARLEY said that the Vote for 1901–2 for special service missions was £16,000, and now the Estimate for 1902–3 was £33,000. That showed an increase of £17,000. He presumed that the increase was put on the Estimate in contemplation of this particular China Tariff Commission. If so, they had the criticism to offer that, notwithstanding that the facts were known, there was a large under-estimate. Again, there had been critical times in China formerly, but the cost of telegrams then had not been nearly so great as it was now. The whole tendency was to increase expenditure without getting value for the money. The explanation the Committee had received to-day was no explanation at all.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said the noble Lord had stated that it was difficult to say what the telegrams would cost in the course of the year. He did not think it was so impossible as the noble Lord represented. With regard to the item for telegrams, here it was said to be "consequent on the state of affairs in the Far East." What was the state of affairs that had cost £6,000 additional? No explanation had yet been given to the Committee of that. There was an item which was not in the Supplementary Estimate. There was nothing as to the state of affairs in Venezuela. A large expenditure must have occurred there. Why had it not been provided for? Was the Far West to be put under the cloak of the Far East? The special missions which were constantly recurring were much to be deprecated. We had a staff of ambassadors, secretaries, and *chargés d'affaires*, and surely they were sufficient for the special missions of this country. His own mission to Gibraltar had not cost the country anything, and he did not know why these special missions cost so much as they did.

The noble Lord had referred to the rulings which precluded the discussion of policy on Supplementary Estimates. Mr. Speaker Peel was of opinion that as a rule the Committee could not discuss policy on the Supplementary Estimates, but he pointed out that these Supplementary Estimates might be such as to raise new questions. Therefore there must be a *caveat* entered against the contention that the Committee could never discuss policy on a Supplementary Estimate. He thought it was very objectionable to have these Supplementary Estimates. A Supplementary Estimate was usual when the Chancellor of the Exchequer found that he had more money than he would require at the finish of the year. One thing that was an abomination to the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to let money go in diminution of the National Debt, and word was passed round to the Departments to get up some extra expenditure. That was the practice. The noble Lord sat with bent brow and did not deny it. When there were no Supplementary Estimates presented, the Departments found it possible to put the charges into next year's Estimate.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) did not think a sufficient explanation had been given of the charge "consequent on the state of affairs in the Far East." The Member for Lynn Regis had probably hit upon the right reason. Certainly the Committee ought to know what was the state of affairs which had caused this enormous charge for telegrams.

*LORD CRANBORNE dissented from the view expressed by the hon. Member for Lynn Regis as to the reason for Supplementary Estimates being presented. The hon. Member had said that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer had a good deal of money to spare, word was conveyed to the Departments to send in Supplementary Estimates. He thought it was very seldom that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had money to spare. So far from pressure being put on the Departments to produce Supplementary Estimates, he could assure the hon. Member and the Committee that nothing annoyed the Government more than supplementary estimates because they were aware of the opportunities they afforded for taking up time that might be otherwise employed. In answer to the hon. Member for the Lichfield Division, he had to state that the negotiation of the China Treaty alone would convince him of the necessity for a large bill for telegraphing. He had the commercial treaty in his hand. It covered ten or eleven pages of close print, every word of which was telegraphed to this country. Then there were telegraphic charges not only for the treaty itself, but also for the negotiations, so that the plenipotentiaries of this country might be fully instructed. The Treaty was before the Committee, and he thought the explanations he had given ought to satisfy the Committee. There were many other matters of interest besides the Treaty which were agitated in the Far East in the year brought to a close, and about which telegrams had to be sent. He would like to remind hon. Gentlemen that they very often put questions to him as to the proceedings in the Far East, and very properly so, and that these questions frequently necessitated telegrams being sent to the Far East.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked if the Vote included the cost of telegrams in reference to Venezuela.

*LORD CRANBORNE said no; his answer referred only to telegrams to the Far East.

*MR. WYLIE (Dumbartonshire) said the Foreign Office had had an enormous amount of work during the past year in connection with negotiations in the Far East. It had had to consult merchants in this country as well as in the Far East, and on the whole it had done its work very well. He was sorry to notice a tendency on the part of some hon. Members to belittle the work which had been thrown on the Chinese Commission, because its work, he conceived, had been beneficial to this country. From the very first he had advocated the necessity for the abolition of the Likin duties and its feasibility The pessimistic views expressed by some hon. Members opposite had weakened the hands of Sir James MacKie in negotiating the treaty, and their predictions as to the faithlessness of the Chinese Government in carrying it out were also most injudicious. This commercial treaty was an enormous advance on the Tien-Tsin Treaty.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he wished to ask whether anything could be discussed on the Supplementary Estimates which could not be discussed on the original Vote?

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN was understood to rule that it could not, unless it was entirely new matter.

*MR. WYLIE said that the principal objection seemed to be taken to the sum of £4,000 in connection with special missions in the Far East, and he contended that that money had been exceedingly well spent, as those who were intimately acquainted with the facts knew perfectly well that the results we had derived from that expenditure were worth it.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said that the Committee wanted to understand the answer the noble Lord had given. The hon. Member for King's Lynn took exception to this £6,000 for telegrams, because he considered that a considerable part of it had been used for carrying on negotiations with Venezuela. Were the Committee to understand that these negotiations with Venezuela had in no way increased the expense of telegrams beyond the sum now named in the Estimates? If they had entailed an increase as compared with the expenditure which was anticipated when the Estimates were framed, his hon. friend was entitled to an answer to his question.

*LORD CRANBORNE said that the money which he was now asking for was for the Far East, and the Far East alone. As to the sums which it had cost the country for telegrams with regard to Venezuela, when the proper time came it would be his duty to submit the matter to the consideration of the Committee.

SIR JOHN GORST asked if they spent all this money on Chinese telegrams, while the Venezuela telegrams had been paid for out of the money voted last year? The House of Commons had the right to know what particular services had caused this increase of expenditure,and if the negotiations with Venezuela had contributed to make that increase necessary the House of Commons had a right to know how much of that increase was due to the particular contingency of the negotiations with Venezuela.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said that the noble Lord had not made this matter clear at all. It was very easy for the noble Lord to say that he allocated this £6,000 for the payment of Chinese telegrams, but he understood that the telegrams to Venezuela had been taken out of the original Vote, and that therefore the noble Lord would have less money to spend on the Chinese telegrams; hence the necessity for the Supplementary Estimate.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that the noble Lord had declared that the whole of this money was for telegrams to the Far East, and that no part of it was a provision for Venezuela telegrams. When he asked the noble Lord when he would be ready to explain the Venezuela telegrams, the noble Lord suggested that the money required for these telegrams would be asked for at some future date. What did that mean? It meant that it would appear in next year's Estimates. Why then did not this Eastern expenditure go into next year's Estimates? Where was the justification for separating the telegrams with regard to Venezuela and China when the expenditure was incurred in the same year? The reason for putting China into the Estimates and omitting Venezuela was conceivably that the Government were anxious to court a discussion with regard to China, and as anxious, or more anxious, to avoid discussion with regard to Venezuela. Would the noble Lord state what the telegrams in connection with Venezuela had cost? He himself put it down at £10,000. He was certain that that sum was not too much.

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN said he would remind the hon. Gentleman that the noble Lord had stated that no part of this Vote was for Venezuela telegrams.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he would not pursue the question of the amount of the Venezuela telegrams; but he had a right to complain of its omission.

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN said that hon. Gentleman could only discuss the Estimates on the paper.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that the Estimate on the paper was dishonest and incomplete, and he would vote for the Amendment.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said that the member of the Government from whom the Committee ought to have an explanation was not the noble Lord, but the Financial Secretary to the Treasury. It was obvious from the noble Lord's answer that there had been some alteration in these Estimates which had put the Committee in a very difficult position to discuss them. What they wanted to know was had there been an attempt made to avoid discussion on Venezuelan questions, and had not this been brought about by the fact that the excess over the original Estimates for telegrams had been put down to China, and the part due to Venezuelan telegrams had been excluded. Surely the Committee was entitled to ask some Member of the Government why it was that if there had been an excess on the China telegrams and equally an excess on the Venezuelan telegrams, the one was here on the Paper, and the other absent. There must be some reason, either financial, or political, for that omission. If the noble Lord could not give a clear explanation it would be necessary to send for the Financial Secretary to the Treasury. [At this point Mr. Hayes Fisher entered the House.] He was glad that the hon. Gentleman had returned to his place. What he wanted to ask the hon. Gentleman was—there must have been clearly an excess on the telegram Vote for Venezuela, and also an excess on the Vote for China—whether the whole of the excess for general telegrams had been put down to China and whether the excess on the Venezuelan telegrams had been paid for out of the ordinary Votes; and, if so, why had the Vote for Venezuela been so placed as to put it out of the power of the Committee to discuss the question? Either both the Votes ought to have been on the Supplementary Estimates or neither of them.

MR. HAYES FISHER said he was sorry he had not been present when the hon. Gentleman first asked his question, but he had been called away by other business. The hon. Gentleman asked him why the Venezuelan telegrams were not included in the Supplementary Estimates. What happened, so far as the Financial Secretary to the Treasury was concerned, was that he sent round to the different departments, and asked them whether they had any Supplementary Estimates, and, if so, whether they would let him know by a certain date. They had obtained the best information they could on the occasion, and were informed that the cause of the Supplementary Estimate was the very excessive number of telegrams with reference to Chinese affairs. He could not possibly give the dates on which all the Supplementary Estimates had been asked for. It would be impossible for him to carry that in his recollection. They were told on the authority of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that enough money had not been taken in the Estimates to meet the necessities of the cost of telegrams in connection with Chinese affairs, and so far as he was aware nothing was said about Venezuela. Most certainly, from the point of view of the Treasury, they had no intention of hiding anything in connection with Venezuela.

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman cannot discuss anything in connection with Venezuela on this Vote, as it is not included in the Vote.

MR. HAYES FISHER said he had no intention of discussing Venezuela. He was merely replying to the hon. Member who stated that the Estimate was presented in such a manner as to shut out the discussion of other topics. The Estimates were not framed with that object, and the Treasury thought that sufficient reason had been adduced to warrant the Committee in passing the Estimate.

MR. KEARLEY said it now appeared that a new system had been introduced, which, in his opinion, was a very unbusinesslike one. At the present time of plentiful surpluses, the last thing a Chancellor of the Exchequer desired was to pay over any part of his surplus to the diminution of the National Debt.

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I would remind the hon. Gentleman that he cannot discuss the general question on this Vote. It would not be in order for him to discuss transference of money from one Vote to another.

MR. KEARLEY said he thoroughly understood that. A question of principle was, however, involved. The system at the Treasury was that all the departments were requested to state their wants, whereupon their wants were satisfied.

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is a general question, and may be discussed on some other occasion. At present the hon. Member can only discuss the actual Supplementary Vote on the Paper.

MR. C. R. SPENCER (Northamptonshire, Mid.) said, on a point of order, that the Secretary to the Treasury explained to the Committee just now the system——

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I stopped the Secretary of the Treasury, and perhaps I ought to have stopped him sooner.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT said he accepted the ruling of the Chair, and wished to know what the telegrams were concerned with. The allusion to China was merely a note. Would the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs give the Committee an assurance that no part of the £6,000 had been used for any other purpose.

LORD CRANBORNE said he stated he was not taking it for any other purpose.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT said the correct view to take of the matter was not what the money was taken for, but how it was to be spent.

MR. KEARLEY said it was quite evident that the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs when he endeavoured to give the Committee an explanation was not fully acquainted with the Estimate. It now appeared that it had not been even decided how the money was to be spent; and the Committee was entitled to know how it was to be spent. The noble Lord had no right to lay down a particular way in which money was to be spent. That was a matter for the Treasury. He submitted that he was entitled to ask the Under Secretary why no money was taken for Somaliland telegrams and Venezuelan telegrams. That was what they wanted to get at, and they were simply being pulled away from the main track on the bare statement of the Under Secretary, who admittedly had not the knowledge of the Estimates possessed by the Secretary to the Treasury. The Committee was entitled to know whether another Supplementary Estimate would have to be submitted later for Somaliland and Venezuelan telegrams.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.) said he thought it would be in the recollection of many hon. Members, especially hon. Members who followed Chinese affairs, that British merchants had great difficulty in North-East China with regard to a certain British railway from Pekin to, practically, Niuchwang. It had passed into the hands of another Power, and finally, after a great deal of trouble and several months negotiation, the Government obtained the railway back. It appeared to him that that process alone must have involved a great number of telegrams.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that as the Secretary to the Treasury was not responsible for the way in which the Estimate had been placed before the Committee, the responsibility went back to the Foreign Office. His point was that the noble Lord was responsible for the form of the Estimate. Altogether £50,000 had been spent on telegrams during the year, and it was quite clear that some of that money was expended on telegrams connected with Venezuela and Somaliland, because those two matters occurred unexpectedly and must have involved additional expenditure. Yet the noble Lord's Department had put down on the Estimate that the whole of the excess was caused by Chinese telegrams. It would be quite clear, he thought, that the excess was not due entirely and absolutely to China, and he therefore wished to know what was the ground on which the House of Commons was not allowed to discuss Somaliland or Venezuela, but was confined to the discussion of Chinese questions. It was not right or fair for the Department, by means of a small note, not only to deceive the House of Commons but to prevent hon. Members from having that legitimate discussion to which they were entitled. The Committee ought to have a really clear explanation from the noble Lord as to why the House of Commons had been jockeyed out of a discussion on Somaliland and Venezuela.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE asked if the noble Lord would state how much had been spent on Chinese telegrams over and above the amount in the Supplementary Estimate.

SIR J. BLUNDELL MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich), said he thought that the explanation on the Paper was quite as much as they could expect. They were told that the telegrams cost £6,000 in excess of the original Estimate. If a mistake were made with regard to the amount required for telegrams to China, and it was exceeded by £6,000, that was a sufficient explanation. He thought the Committee had been told quite sufficient.

*MR. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs) thought that this was rather a storm in a teacup. When the noble Lord had given full explanation on this point every one would be satisfied. If they had the information as to how much of the £44,000 had been allocated to telegrams to China and the information asked for by the hon. Member for Poplar they would be in the position of knowing how much had been spent.

*Lord CRANBORNE said the full amount spent for telegrams from Pekin was £16,846, including the sum now asked for; the telegrams from the Foreign Office were not distinguished and he could not therefore give that information. The hon. Member for Poplar had asked for some further explanation on this point. The hon. Member had quite mistaken what the original nature of the Estimate was. It was an Estimate for many years submitted to the Committee for a large sum of money for various items. It was impossible to tell how much telegrams were going to cost, and this sum was taken by the Foreign Office as an estimate of what was likely to be the cost of telegrams for the year. All sorts of contingencies had to be taken into account and to say that the condition of things in South America was to be excluded from these Estimates was an unwarrantable assumption. There was no reason in the world why Venezuela should not be included in that sum. Among other places China had to be dealt with. The service to China was very expensive and a great expense had been thrown upon this country through what had taken place there. What had taken place in China? First of all, there was the commercial treaty which had been negotiated; then there was the transfer of the territory from the troops in occupation to the Chinese authorities, and there was also the question of the Russian evacuation of Manchuria, which at a later stage came within these telegrams; then there was the drawing up of the protocol. All these matters had to be done by telegram It would, of course, be out of order to discuss those questions now, and he had only mentioned them to show how heavy was the charge thrown on the Foreign Office by telegrams to China. The House might be sure they were not going to be deprived of their right to criticise the Estimates, and that when the original Estimates came on there would be no such restriction as was placed by the Chairman on the Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he certainly should not withdraw his Amendment, because the noble Lord had put the case for the Amendment even more strongly than it had been put before. The noble Lord had told the Committee that this Vote was taken for telegrams all over the world. It was all very well to say that when the Estimates came on there would be no restriction in discussing them, but they would be new Estimates dealing with new facts.

Mr. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE thought these telegrams were a curse to the country. A great deal of money had been spent, and the noble Lord told them a commercial treaty had been ratified, every word of which had had to be telegraphed to and fro many times. That was a system of centralisation with which he did not agree. We sent competent and capable men abroad who had our interest at heart and if they continually felt the check string from Downing Street they lost all individuality. He protested against trying to manage all these matters from home.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 108; Noes, 189. (Division List No. 11.)

AYES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Ambrose, Robert
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Davies, M. Vaughan- (*Cardign*
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duffy, William J.
Dunn, Sir William
Evans, Saml. T. (*Glamorgan*)
Ffrench, Peter
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*)
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Holland, Sir William Henry

Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Lambert, George
Law, H. Alex. (*Donegal, W.*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Govern, T.
M'Kenna, Reginald
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Col. J. P. (*Galway, N.*
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, South*)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, Kend. (*Tipperary, Mid*
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Connor, James (*Wicklow, W*
O'Doherty, William
O'Donnell, T. (*Kerry, W.*)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Connor (*Mayo, N.*)
O'Kelly, James (*Roscommon, N*
O'Mara, James
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (*Durham*
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (*Waterford*
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, Sir R. T. (*Dumfries*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs*)
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Samuel, S. M. (*Whitechapel*)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Smith, Samuel (*Flint*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn C. R. (*Northants*
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, David A. (*Merthyr*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W.R.*
Toulmin, George
Wallace, Robert
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whiteley, George (*York, W.R.*
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, F. W. (*Norfolk, Mid.*
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Mr. Charles Hobhouse and Mr. Warner.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Aird, Sir John
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Beckett, Ernest William
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Brassey, Albert
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt Hn J A (*Glasg.*)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, H. Shepherd (*Bolton*)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R. (*Tr. Haml'ts*
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (*City of Lond*
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (*St. Albans*
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gore, Hn G R. C. Ormsby-(*Salop*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hamilton, Marq. of (*Londondy*
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robt. Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashfd*
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hobhouse, Rt Hn H (*Somrst E*
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (*Sheff., B'tside*)
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Johnstone, Heywood
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (*Salop*
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockie, John
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Malcolm, Ian
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, William
Morgan, David J (*Walthamstow*
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (*Bute*
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn Wm Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert

Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hon. M. W (*Stalybridge*
Ridley, S. Forde (*Bethnal Green*
Ritchie, Rt Hon. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*
Seely, Maj. J. E. B (*Isle of Wight*
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks*
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (*Exeter*)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Welby, Lt.-Col. A C E (*Taunton*
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York E.R.*)
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson, J. W. (*Worcestersh. N.*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £69,600, be granted to His Majesty to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1903, for the Grant in aid of the British Protectorate in East Africa."

MR. M'KENNA (Monmouthshire, N.), in moving the reduction of the Vote by £100, complained that no Papers dealing with the subject had been issued to Members, who were entitled to know whether this Supplementary Estimate was due to a "muddle" or a "mess." The original Vote of £244,000 was nearly three times larger than the original Vote of the preceding year. Now they were asked for this additional £69,600, and not a word of explanation had been given. They were not told what had happened in British East Africa, or why this additional charge was proposed. Since the Government took over the protectorate from the British East Africa Company nine years ago we had spent in grants in aid of British East Africa £1,200,000. That was an average of £133,000 a year. But the expenditure had been increasing, and in the last three years the average was £212,300 a year. In the six years ended March 31st, 1900, we had spent in grants in aid £566,675, and during the same period the total British trade with British East Africa amounted only to £540,000. That meant that even if all the goods landed in British East Africa cost us nothing to manufacture or deliver, and all the goods we received were delivered here without cost, we should still be the losers.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow; Committee also report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1902-3.

CLASS V.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £69,600, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1903, for the Grant in Aid of the British Protectorate in East Africa."

MR. M'KENNA said when the business of the Committee was interrupted he was pointing out to the Committee that the total value of British trade, imports and exports, with British East Africa during the first six years of our occupation was £540,000, and that our grants in aid during the same period had far exceeded in extent our total trade. The grants in aid during the year ended March 1900–1901 had amounted to £227,000, or one and a half times as much as the whole value of our exports and imports during the same period with the protectorate. One of the advantages we derived from having such protectorates was the expansion of our trade, but what was the price we were paying for it? From the point of view of pounds shillings and pence, he asked the noble Lord to consider whether the character of the expenditure which we undertook in these protectorates was warranted by the commercial advantages we obtained from them. The total amount of this Vote now asked for, £313,000, was about three times as much as was asked for three years ago, and about four times the amount of the grant asked for last year, and although he had not the figures for the trade of the present year he was inclined to think it would amount to twice the value of the imports and exports between this country and British East Africa. That was the amount the Committee was asked to vote without a word of explanation or without a Paper being laid on the Table of the House.

The noble Lord would no doubt reply that we were doing a great work in East Africa, and that the money the House was now asked to provide was for good administrative work in that country. He would not dispute that; he was prepared to believe that every penny of the money would be well spent for the object for which it was asked. But that was not the only point of view from which this matter ought to be regarded. The noble Lord in a previous debate had spoken of the revenue of East Africa as a trifling sum in relation to the whole cost of the Empire, and that was true, but this was not the only place for which £313,000 was being asked. We were spending money in Uganda and Somaliland and other parts of Africa, and although such a sum was a mere trifle as compared with the whole cost, all these items totalled up to an enormous sum. The cost of British East Africa amounted in all to over a million and a quarter. Under those circumstances he submitted that the Committee were entitled to ask whether it was a wise policy to carry on a form of government in these protectorates which the protectorates themselves could not pay for, and which, naturally, placed so heavy a burden on the people of this country. If these expenses were so trifling, we should not have to pay for them by an income tax reckoned by shillings, but by pence, and a bread tax that fell most heavily on the poorest of the poor. Although the work being done might be admirable work in itself, he would ask the noble Lord to consider whether it was work he should allow the British people to pay for, and whether it was work which was contemplated when British East Africa was taken over as a British Colony. The policy the noble Lord advocated then was that it should be administered at a cost of £30,000, it was now £300,000. He asked the Committee to say that the time had come to review this policy as a whole, and to keep their eye on the question of strict economy. On these grounds he begged leave to move the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £69,500, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. M'Kenna.*)

MR. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield), in supporting the Amendment, asked the noble Lord the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs if he could assure the Committee that no magistrate whose salary was covered by this Vote was administering a law which acknowledged the legal *status* of slavery. He also desired to know whether any part of the Vote was going, either directly or indirectly, in payment of amounts which had been already passed for the making of the Uganda Railway. He would also like to know whether there were any arrears of pay due to our Indian soldiers in East Africa as would appear by the Vote, as he thought this was a thing which in a rich Empire like this should never be allowed to occur. In his opinion, the Committee ought to be furnished with a Report from the Foreign Office showing what had been done in this immense territory in the twelve months, so that they might discuss the Vote with knowledge.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) said that, if they desired to effect any economy at all, it was necessary that they should examine, not only the large, but the small items of expenditure. He should regard this Vote rather as an illustrative case. The first thing he had got to say about it was that within the last three years they had about doubled the amount of expenditure upon the administration of this particular protectorate, and that the greater part of it was absolutely unproductive. The second thing was, what had they got in return for that expenditure? He put aside for the moment the moral dignity and the civilising influences which accrued to this country because of money spent in the administration of a savage territory like this.

What was the return in pounds, shillings, and pence for the money spent in respect of that country? He found that for a period of six years the surplus outlay of the taxation of this country upon this particular protectorate exceeded the total value of the imports and exports which passed between Great Britain and British East Africa. And let the Committee get rid of the cant phrase of "making markets." This was a rather serious matter. It meant that we were working at an absolute dead loss in respect of this one particular protectorate. The Committee had no means whatever of checking the expenditure from the particulars which were furnished in the Vote. They were told that £69,000 was required in aid of the expenses of administration, and that was all. Considering the enormous sums of money involved, if any private business were conducted with the kind of audit by means of which they were expected to carry on the affairs of this country, it would go to pieces, and be in bankruptcy in the course of a few months. It was impossible to dwell too often on the fact that while they were constantly complaining of this state of things, it was even now impossible to put a finger on any particular item. Although they often heard complaints in their constituencies of increased expenditure and increased taxation, hon. Members were powerless to protect themselves against it. Even the statement of the noble Lord would not enable them to come to any satisfactory conclusion. The system was one under which Parliamentary control had become practically ineffective.

*LORD CRANBORNE said the hon. Gentleman who moved the reduction really brought an indictment against our position in East Africa. That, of course, called in question a policy for which this Government was not in the least especially responsible, a policy deliberately adopted by the country at large and endorsed by vote after vote of the House of Commons. He thought it was a little too much to ask the Minister in charge to defend an indictment of that kind at that time of the day. Governments drawn from both sides of the House had felt that it was our duty to own these protectorates, and if they owned them he could not believe that any House of Commons would doubt that it was their duty to develop them, and as the policy was adopted not on purely commercial grounds it was not fair to charge the Government with ill success because it was not already commercially successful. It was adopted partly on humanitarian grounds, and partly on political grounds of the highest order. Surely the hon. Member would not wish them to have stood aside when the great modern development of Africa took place. We were bound to develop the property we had acquired; that we should stay like a dog in the manger in East Africa and allow the protectorate and population to look after themselves was a policy unworthy of any British Government, and it was one which the present Government were certainly not prepared to adopt. In estimating the progress of the protectorates it was almost impossible to separate East Africa from Uganda, because they had a common Customs union.

MR. M'KENNA said if he had used the figures for Uganda his case would have been much stronger.

*LORD CRANBORNE said the combined volume of trade in 1899-1900 was £452,000, while in 1902-3 they estimated it at about £1,000,000. But the latter figure was not one on which they could argue as to the natural progress of trade, as great deductions must be made from it in respect of the Uganda Railway, of Government stores, and of specie. But, after the deductions had been made, the total volume of trade during the time the protectorates had belonged to this country had been far in excess of the hon. Gentleman's figures. The interests of this Protectorate were not limited to trade with the United Kingdom, and there was a very considerable trade with India. Therefore, it was only fair, in calculating the trade value to include India. The trade with Great Britain and India amounted to 63 per cent. of the whole trade in Uganda and East Africa. That was a very large figure, and he did not think that, at any rate as far as proportion went, anyone would say that the trade with the protectorates showed up badly. Did the British House of Commons only represent the taxpayers? Were they to shut out all the rest of the Empire? As the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton once said, every Member of Parliament was Member for India. That statement had a great effect on the House at the time and he quoted it in aid now. He had a right to calculate the Indian as well as the English trade. Making all deductions for the Uganda Railway, for Government stores, and for specie, he could still show that 29 per cent. belonged to the United Kingdom and 34 per cent. to India. This showed that great progress had been made in the trade with the British Empire.

The hon. and learned Member for Dumfries spoke of the great increase in the grant in aid. It was true that it was increasing; but there were very considerable deductions to be made from the figure that had been given. There were the working expenses for six months of the Uganda Railway, which were estimated at £50,000; the cost of the two steamers amounted to £57,000, and at a later period of the year he was afraid he should have to ask for a little more money in respect of them; and the surveys of the lake cost £6,000, these items amounting altogether to £113,600, or about £114,000, which was the figure he had given. He was now dealing with East Africa and Uganda combined, but the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dumfries dealt with East Africa alone. He would point out that when the hon. and learned Gentleman compared the grant in aid for East Africa last year with that for the present year, it should be remembered that a large portion of Uganda had been transferred to East Africa. The expenditure on East Africa in the two years he was considering rose from £180,000 to £330,000, but the grant for Uganda fell from £205,000 to £170,000, because of the transfer which had taken place. East Africa of three years ago was not the East Africa they were dealing with in the present Estimates. As to the details of the present demand, there was a demand by the Indian Government in respect of Indian troops which had been lent on several occasions. It seemed that it was a very complicated matter to ascertain this indebtedness, and year after year it was found that a little more was due. There were one or two other items which he wished to give to the Committee. There was a sum for compensation for moving the bazaar in Nairobi, in consequence of the plague. The hon. Gentleman who seconded the Amendment called the Government to account for that, but they were not responsible for the plague. The plague was not conveyed by His Majesty's Government, but probably by rats, and the Government could not be held responsible for that. They had to suppress the plague at considerable cost, amounting to £13,000. Then there was a sum of £4,000 for the rehousing of troops. It was found that the huts for the troops at Nairobi had been erected in unsuitable places, and fresh accommodation had to be found. Hon. Members did not always select the most suitable places for houses.

The East African Protectorate went as far as the Juba river, where there were some very turbulent tribes who had given a great deal of trouble. After two expeditions against these tribes, the Government made up their minds that they must take precautions to prevent difficulties of the same kind in the future. For that purpose mobile troops were required, and a camel corps was formed, the cost of which was £7,700. Of that amount £3,800 was now asked for. Then there was a sum of £2,900 due to the Uganda Railway for the carriage of mails, and a sum of £1,400 for law courts at Mombasa and Jubaland; and lastly there was the sum of £11,000 due to a falling off in the revenue. They estimated for a very slight surplus, and they were disappointed. All these accounts had to go before the Controller and Auditor-General; and although the Committee might differ from the policy that produced this expenditure, he did not think they would accuse the Government of spending money that was not fully and properly due in the estimation of the Controller and Auditor-General. He was quite certain that the Government would not be borne out by the House of Commons or the country if they forsook the Protectorate. Now they were in the country the Government were bound to develop it, and he did not want the Committee to carry away the notion that they were at the end of this expenditure. To make their possession fruitful and profitable they must spend money in its development, and he very respectfully warned the Committee of that, so that they might not accuse the Government of deceiving them on the subject.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said he did not intend to touch upon the important point raised by his hon. friend, namely, the slavery on the strip of mainland. The noble Lord was entitled to say that under present conditions the Committee could not discuss that. He had no doubt they would have another opportunity of discussing the subject in the course of their debates. He complained that in these African matters no explanation was given to the Committee before the debates took place. For the last five or six years Supplementary Estimates had been presented which made it impossible for the Committee to check the expenditure. The bulk of the items the noble Lord had mentioned certainly ought to have been foreseen, if not by the Foreign Office, at all events, by those administering the country. He instanced the camel corps as a matter on which there could not have been such great urgency as to necessitate a Supplementary Estimate. The additional grant now asked in aid of the British East Africa Protectorates amounted to nearly £70,000. That, he held, was excessive, and he did not think there was any excuse for the bulk of the items of which it was made up.

With regard to general policy and principle, he thought there was really no difference of opinion in any quarter of the House. What many hon. Members were beginning to feel was, that the way in which these Colonies were being developed was not the right one. They did not grudge the money necessary for the proper development of the countries, but what they felt was that the Foreign Office in attempting to administer these enormous tracts were going too far, and were not taking proper precautions to avoid conflicts and wars. As his hon. friend had pointed out, the cost of administration this year was £800,000 as against £500,000 last year. Surely that enormous expenditure required more justification than had yet been given on behalf of the Government. He did not believe the Committee were really aware of the enormous increase that had taken place. Surely that was an expenditure which could hardly be said to be a question of general policy. Not a single sixpence had been spent for the benefit of the Colony in the matter of our trade, and so far as that was concerned all this money had practically been sunk in the African desert. He was surprised at the figures which had been given, in regard to the financial position of this enormous tract of country. The Under Secretary boasted that the total volume of trade in these East African colonies had now risen to £415,000, but the noble Lord should look at the other side of the account. He should also take the liabilities and the expenditure of these Colonies. Including the cost of the Uganda Railway, the whole annual cost of these Colonies was £710,000, while our total volume of trade—not the profit—was only £415,000.

*LORD CRANBORNE: That was the total volume of trade with the British Empire.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that made it worse and worse, for he thought that there was the Indian trade besides. It was time to call a halt to the unlimited and unchecked expenditure of the Foreign Office. If the administration of Uganda were taken out of the hands of that Department, and put under the Colonial Office, many economies might be effected.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL asked whether, in relation to the loan for the building of the Uganda Railway, any allowance was made for a sinking fund.

*LORD CRANBORNE: Not in the Supplementary Estimate.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL called attention to the outbreak of plague at Nairobi, and stated it was felt that this was partly due to the insanitary position and condition of the bazaar. That bazaar had been burned, and compensation had to be paid to the owners of shops there. There was in the Estimates an item for the moving of the troops from the situation in which they had been placed at Nairobi. He wished to know whether it was proposed to remove the whole of the railway population to more healthy houses on a higher site. The town had now a population of about 8,000; and if there was nothing in the accounts to pay for their removal, he believed the House of Commons would be called upon later to vote money for that purpose. This expenditure was entirely due to an error on the part of the railway engineers, for whom the Government were indirectly responsible. He asked whether there had been any receipts from the sale of Government lands, and whether the colonisation of the higher lands had progressed. He asked further, whether the Government had yet made any provision for a paper currency in East Africa. That was a matter on which the success of trade in East Africa in some measure depended, and with trade, necessarily the increase of the revenue. His hon. friend had referred to the necessity for transferring the administration of these protectorates from the Foreign Office to the Colonial Office. There was undoubtedly a strong public opinion in East Africa and Uganda in favour of the transfer. He knew there was a difficulty in the way in connection with treaty obligations with regard to Zanzibar; but he asked the noble Lord whether he could not hold out any prospect in the future of this being overcome and this transference being made to the Colonial Office. He also wished to know when the annual report of the condition, prospects and revenue of this Protectorate would be laid before Parliament. He had been unable to obtain a Report in the library later than 1901.

*LORD CRANBORNE said that it had been done already.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL said he knew there was a paper giving figures which covered the imports and exports, but there was no Report from the Chief Commissioner himself as to any measures that were being taken for developing the territory as a whole. In Sir Charles Eliot the Foreign Office had an exceedingly able servant, whose administration had given extreme satisfaction to all classes of the community.

*LORD CRANBORNE: Sir Charles Eliot belongs to the Foreign Office.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL said no doubt, but there was equally no doubt that if Sir Charles Eliot were transferred to the Colonial Office his efficiency would be increased. That was the prevalent opinion in East Africa itself.

MR. LOUGH said he could not second the appeal for the transfer of these protectorates from the Foreign Office to the Colonial Office, for he thought it was just six of one and half-a-dozen of the other. The last instance was that of Nigeria.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN said the hon. Member could not discuss on this Vote the transfer of Uganda to the Colonial Office.

MR. LOUGH said he had only referred to it as two hon. Members had been allowed to develop the argument, and he wished to enter his protest against it. This was the third time within the year that large Estimates had been produced for these protectorates and the Uganda Railway, and he desired to protest in the strongest way against the additional Supplementary Estimate of £70,000. There was not one of the items on the Paper which might not have been left over until the new Estimates were prepared and laid before the House for full discussion. The meaning of the Supplementary Estimates was to get from the Committee more money than was necessary, by taking large amounts in separate bits instead of in one sum. The noble Lord had given quite inadequate explanations as to the reasons for this enormously increased expenditure. He, for one, did not want explanations; he wanted economy. The noble Lord had practically said that he was not the man for economy; that if we had these Colonies we must develop them; and he went the length of declaring that the Committee must expect still greater expenditure in the future. But what he contended for was that these countries should be developed with some regard to the trade we got out of them. The noble Lord had said that the trade of these territories with Great Britain and India amounted to 63 or 64 per cent. of the whole trade. But the greater part of the trade was with India, and the point was, who should pay the expense? India certainly did not pay the expense. The pettifogging share of the trade to Great Britain was only 29 per cent., but that was on the gross volume of the trade. If the profits on the trade were estimated at 20 per cent. there would be only a return to Great Britain of £28,000 a year for all this enormous expenditure. No country could be expected to stand that. The noble Lord seemed to be of the belief that this bad affair might be bettered by extravagant expenditure.

The Colonies, of which we were all so proud, had not been developed by the expenditure of this country, but by cautious and wise expenditure by the Colonies themselves. This new feature in the development of the Colonies of the British Empire had only been introduced into the African Colonies and protectorates. The lavish and wasteful policy of the Foreign Office was constantly revealing new extravagances. The noble Lord had told the Committee that the mean city of Nairobi, which they had founded, would have to be removed altogether because it had been put in an insanitary situation. He protested in the most indignant way against all this extravagance, and he was glad that hon. Members opposite were beginning to ask for some economy in expenditure.

MR. M'KENNA said that the noble Lord had stated that this Government was not responsible for taking over East Africa, or for the present expenditure. He would remind the noble Lord that British East Africa had been very well administered until three years ago: that was to say that for the first six years it had only cost on an average £90,000 a year. What he complained of was not that the British Government was there, but that the expenditure had been increased from £90,000 to over £200,000 a year.

SIR JOHN GORST said that the noble Lord had very properly warned the House that, having undertaken the management of these territories, we had to develop them, and spend a certain amount of money upon them. He agreed that we could not go back from our obligations, and that it was absolutely necessary on our part to do everything to develop these countries. But what he wanted to press on the noble Lord was, that this development ought to take place on a definite plan, and that the Foreign Office should not drift into one expenditure, and then another, without a definite plan of development. The Government ought to take the House of Commons into its confidence and give them information as to the condition of the country. Egypt had got the Sudan on its hands very much in the same way as we had got Uganda and the East African Protectorate, but the Government of Egypt, under the advice of Lord Cromer, proceeded in the development of the Sudan on a clear and definite plan. The whole circumstances of the country had been taken into consideration, its resources, and its possibilities for producing revenue. Why should not Uganda and the East African Protectorate be dealt with in a similar manner, and why should not the Government plainly state to Parliament what they intended to do with these countries, what their plans were and their expectations as to the future revenues and prosperity of these territories? Though, no doubt, they might criticise the Government plans, he was sure that the House of Commons as a whole would cheerfully vote without wrangling the money necessary to carry out a clear and definite plan.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said that there was a good deal in what the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had stated. This was not a question of giving up these territories, but of spending this money on business principles. In large private concerns people often spent money in extending trade, quite content to bear a loss for some years to come. But when doing that it was done on sound business principles; some development of profit was looked forward to in the course of a few years. If the Committee was satisfied that the Government were spending this money economically and efficiently on development, he was certain that the House of Commons would not complain; but any one who had examined the Estimates from year to year could not be satisfied that that was being done. There were two arguments which indicated that there was something wrong. He did not say that because the present expenditure exceeded the trade that that was conclusive; but at all events it formed a *primâ facie* case that the Government were not running these territories on purely business lines. We had a falling revenue and an increasing expenditure, which showed that our attempts to develop these countries had not been successful.

His second point was that a man running a business of this sort would carefully examine his estimates before expenditure; but these Estimates had been exceeded in expenditure by from 20 to 30, and sometimes 100, per cent. in the course of a single year. That showed that whoever was responsible for the expenditure had not carefully calculated beforehand what was wanted, although he did not say that the expenditure could be estimated to a penny. The rats had been blamed, and his hon. friend thought that the way to cure that was to hand over the administration of these territories to the Colonial Office. He should have thought that that was the last extremity in the world, except on the principle of setting a thief to catch a thief. Then, it was said that there were not merely rats, but some bad Mohammedan gentlemen, a sort of Church party, in these territories; but the right hon. Gentleman must have known perfectly well that in countries of that sort they might anticipate the opposition of these Mohammedan gentlemen. The noble Lord had said that it was not necessary to set down the interest on loans and the sinking fund when reckoning up this business, but that only showed the notions of the Foreign Office about business principles. He wanted to know what were the prospects of these territories, and what they were spending this money for. He had listened with great interest to the noble Lord in reference to development, but the Committee had no idea yet as to what was the policy of the Government with regard to development; and if the House of Commons was asked to sanction this huge expenditure they were entitled to know what the plans of the Government were.

*LORD CRANBORNE said that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, and his right hon. friend below the Gangway had both told the Committee and the country that if the Foreign Office could point to a policy to show for this expenditure, the House of Commons would vote the money. Of course, the Foreign Office had a plan, but he did not think that a Supplementary Estimate was the proper occasion on which to speak of their plans for development. There were large agricultural prospects, in addition to large mining ones, and in respect of these they had issued a considerable number of concessions. He would not like the debate to close without assuring the right hon. Gentleman that the policy of the Foreign Office was being pursued with great vigour. Of course that cost money, but he hoped that later on he would be able to show good results for the expenditure. With regard to the sale of lands, they had only just been sanctioned, and consequently there was no return under that head. In reference to Zanzibar, the hon. Member for the Cleveland Division had asked what steps had been taken to transfer the territories to the Colonial Office, but he could only point out that, undoubtedly, there would be great convenience in keeping them in the hands of the Foreign Office so long as that Department had control of the foreign relations in connection with that territory. With regard to reports, there were the Diplomatic and Consular Reports for the year ending March, 1902, containing statistics with regard to trade in the Protectorate; and there was Sir Charles Eliot's general Report on the Protectorate, to which reference had been made.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 79; Noes, 141. (Division List No. 12.)

AYES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Boland, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Ffrench, Peter
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Law, H. Alex. (*Donegal, W.*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*)
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, South*)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien Kendal (*Tipperary Mid*
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Connor, James (*Wicklow, W.*
O'Donnell, T. (*Kerry, W.*)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (*Mayo, N.*)
O'Kelly, James (*Roscommon, N.*
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (*Waterford*
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C R (*Northants*
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. M'Kenna and Mr. Thomas Bayley.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Austin, Sir John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gore, Hn G R. C. Ormsby- (*Salop*
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hamilton, Marq. of (*Londondy*
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robt. Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashfd*
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T
Hope, J. F. (*Sheff., B'tside*)
Johnstone, Heywood
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (*Salop*
Knowles, Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Mitchell, William
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (*Hants.*
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, David J (*Walthamst'w*
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn. W. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick

Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (*Stalybridge*
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*
Seely, Mj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, H. C (*Northmb. Tyneside*
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks*
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Ed. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York, E.R*
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson, J. W. (*Worcestersh., N*
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hn. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question put and agreed to.

CLASS II.

2. £620 (SUPPLEMENTARY), VALUATION AND BOUNDARY SURVEY (IRELAND).

MR. KEARLEY asked whether the Committee on the Revaluation of Ireland was to be reappointed, and why there was to be a sum of £500 due from the city of Belfast.

MR. HAYES FISHER said it was intended to reappoint the Committee. There was a dispute between the city of Belfast and the Treasury, but it was thought right not to press the claim now. It would stand over for a little while.

MR. KEARLEY asked what was the nature of the dispute between the Belfast Corporation and the Treasury.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover) said that in Ireland there had been no valuation for forty years. From year to year, however, they had had revision in place of valuation, but it had only taken count of structural alterations, and not of the new changes introduced into the principle of valuation. During that forty years the Licensing Act had been passed, and in England the value of licences had been added to the value of the premises for the purposes of valuation. That, however, had not been done in Ireland. When any of the six cities of Ireland asked for a revaluation under the Optional Valuation Act for Ireland it became the duty of the Commissioner of Valuation to revalue the premises, for the first time in Ireland, according to law, and the law laid it down that the value of a licence under the Licensing Act should be taken into account. The City of Belfast exercised its option and asked for a valuation, which was carried out. On a technical point the award of the Commissioner was brought into court, and a decision was given which brought about a deadlock in Belfast. One night in August last, or rather at three o'clock in the morning, the House was called upon to find a way out of the difficulty, and after consultation behind the Chair the issue was found in the familiar device of promising a committee to inquire into the whole question of valuation in Ireland, it being agreed that until the committee had reported the added valuation for licences should not be imposed in Belfast.

MR. KEARLEY: Am I correct in understanding that the valuation was of a voluntary character, and that the results were so drastic that the people of the city objected and are resisting their indebtedness on the basis of the new valuation?

MR. WYNDHAM said the city exercised its option in asking for a revaluation and it was to the interest of all the ratepayers that the valuation should be made, but opposition — on technical grounds—was raised by the owners of licensed premises and that brought about the deadlock, to find a way out of which the House appointed a committee. Until that committee had reported the Government did not think it should take further action.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): When is the committee likely to report?

MR. WYNDHAM: It is to be re-appointed at once, and, as it made considerable progress last session, I do not think its Report will be long delayed.

Question put and agreed to.

CLASS IV.

£292,807 (Supplementary), Board of Education.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.) asked for an explanation of the increased charge. Was it due to an improvement in the average attendance at the school, or to an increase in the percentage of regular attendance, or to the fact that children remained at school for a longer period than formerly? Either way it indicated an improvement in educational matters, and he did not think the Committee would be indisposed to grant the additional money asked for seeing that it represented the ha'porth of tar that made the ship good. Personally he was very glad the Board of Education was making an additional demand that night.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University) said the Supplementary Estimate was large, but the Committee would not be displeased at the cause, because it arose from increased and more regular attendances. That increase had been beyond all anticipation. In 1898 the increase over the previous year was 65,000 odd; in 1899 it was 82,700; in 1900, the year of the war, it dropped to 29,000, but the following year it rose again to 69,453. For the year ending August, 1902, the calculation had been made for an increase of between 70,000 and 80,000 children over the previous year, whereas the attendances had increased by over 160,000. He put the increase down to two causes; firstly, the effect of Robson's Act, which raised the age at which children were permitted to go to work for half-time, and secondly—a more important cause—to the effect of the Act of 1900, under which School Boards and School Attendance Committees were empowered to substitute the age of fourteen for thirteen, as the age for compulsory attendance under bye-laws. The Act of 1870 gave to School Boards the power to make bye-laws requiring children to attend to an age not exceeding thirteen. The Act of 1876 extended that power to School Attendance Committees; but although it stated that the age of children lasted until fourteen, it did not extend that power beyond thirteen. The Act of 1900, however, gave power to extend the age up to fourteen. To that he thought they might largely attribute the increased attendance. There was another cause to which he attributed not merely increased attendance, but increased regularity of attendance, which he thought was as satisfactory, if not more satisfactory than the other, and that was the Clause in the Act of 1900 which enabled the fine for non-attendance to be raised from 5s. to £1. In some districts that had almost doubled the regularity of attendance. He would only mention the further very satisfactory result that the increased attendance and the increased regularity of attendance were fairly uniform all over the country. The average increase during the year ended the 1st of August, 1902, might be put at 3 per cent. The increase in the Welsh counties was 3·8 per cent. and in the Welsh boroughs 3·1 per cent. He hoped he had explained in a satisfactory way the reason why the Board of Education had to ask for such a large Supplementary Estimate, and that the house would grant it.

MR. WHITLEY said he wished to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether if it were not for a certain alteration made by his Department there would have been any necessity to ask for a Supplementary Vote now. He was not opposing the increase asked for or the change made by the Department last year in connection with a grant for evening schools, which were regulated by the Minute of July 3rd, 1901. But during the year, the Board of Education in addition to the grant under the Minute made a Supplementary Grant; and if that Supplementary Grant had not been paid the increase now asked for would not be required. He desired to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if he could tell the Committee on what principle that Supplementary Grant was made to evening schools. At any rate, it ought to be shown in some form on the Estimates.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £28,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1903, for the Expenses of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland."

*MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.) said he desired to call attention to what had recently happened in the West of Ireland. Continuation schools were started in Mayo; and, with the authority of the Board of Education, it was decided that the two subjects to be taught in them should be the Irish language and Irish history. The schools were continued for some months, but for some reason, which he hoped the Chief Secretary would explain, the National Education Board refused to pay the teachers engaged in those schools on the ground that the subjects chosen did not fall within the scope of continuation schools. He believed he was right in saying that the two subjects he mentioned were not only on the curriculum of the Board, but were sufficient in themselves. They in Ireland felt strongly with regard to the matter, because they believed that for the education of their country and for its future industrial development, it was extremely important that a national foundation should be given to education; and they held that no better means could be taken to develop the educational interests of their people and educate them on national lines than to give them an opportunity throughout Ireland of studying their own language and their own history. The experience of foreign countries proved that the studies of those two subjects did more to lay a proper foundation, not only for sound education, but also for sound industrial development, than any other subjects. It could not be alleged that the schools in Mayo to which he referred were meant to be carried on with those two subjects alone for any prolonged period. It was quite within the right of the manager to select any further subjects; and they hoped that where it was within the right of a manager that a start should be made with subjects approved by the National Education Board, managers should have a right to continue any subjects they thought fit, or substitute any others. He begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £27,900, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Boland.*)

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.) said he desired to support the Motion. The question of evening schools was one of very considerable importance in Ireland. Evening schools in their country were yet in their infancy, and needed support from local managers and others interested in education in order to make them successful. He held in his hand a letter from a gentleman in Co. Mayo who had taken a great interest in the subject. As soon as he saw the advantage that evening schools would confer on his district he at once set about establishing them. He wrote to the Board of Education to ascertain the rules, and having ascertained the rules he immediately established an evening school, choosing as its subjects, the Irish language and Irish history as being the best suited to the district, and being, in his opinion, the subjects which, at the beginning, would tend to make the school successful. In a few months he had some 500 pupils. He wrote to the Board and asked whether they would sanction the school and the subjects, and he was informed by an official that they were perfectly within the rules. Dr. Starkie, the Resident Commissioner, also assured him that his programme was in order, but in a very short time the Board reconsidered the matter, and after the school had been in operation for over two months, they revised their rules and made it essential that two other subjects should also be included. He thought it was a very strange state of affairs if the National Board make rules at the beginning of a session for the guidance and control of schools, and such rules should not remain in operation during that session. The gentleman he referred to engaged teachers from Dublin and Cork, who, of course, expected to be paid, but he now found that the teachers would not be paid, because the school was not sanctioned. The gentleman writing said that it was not easy to induce a mass of the people to study, and that the labouring classes would only be drawn to education by subjects in which they were interested; yet, when he tried to stimulate education in his parish the National Board declined to support him. Much had been said about the unsympathetic and apathetic way in which the managers of national schools treated the educational interests entrusted to their charge, yet Dr. Starkie himself did not hesitate to prevent a local gentleman from giving education to 500 or 600 boys, while at the same time he accused managers of schools of not taking any interest in their schools. It was evident from the letter to which he had referred, that if managers displayed an interest in their schools they found their efforts blocked at every turn by the Board. He hoped the Chief Secretary would give some explanation and some assurance that such action would not be repeated in the future.

With reference to the salaries of principal and assistant teachers, he wished to ask the Chief Secretary whether it was not a fact that as a result of the recent changes in the system of payment, a considerable number of teachers, although they were promised that there would be no diminution in their salaries, had suffered pecuniarily. He wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman had received a petition from ninety-five teachers saying that owing to the changes in the system of payment they had been injured financially, and asking for an inquiry. He thought the least that might be done in response to the petition was to grant an inquiry, and find out whether the complaint in the petition was just. There was also another point, namely, the average attendance necessary for the appointment of a second teacher in a small school. They were all aware that one of the great essentials for the development of any country, especially a poor country like Ireland, was that young boys and girls should be thoroughly and properly educated during the few years they could spend at school. At present the average attendance for the appointment of one assistant in Ireland was sixty, whereas in a rich country like England it was only fifty. Every educationist in Ireland, even the National Board, was of opinion that it would be very much to the advantage of education if the average were reduced, and he hoped the Chief Secretary would be able to inform the Committee that it was about to be reduced, and that the right hon. Gentleman would impress on the Treasury the great advantage of such a reduction.

MR. WYNDHAM said that at first blush the Supplementary Estimate was a matter for congratulation rather than regret, inasmuch as the bulk of it was due to the fulfilment of promises, while £6,700 of the increase had been caused by the rapid expansion of the evening continuation schools. But how was it that the increase had come upon the Committee so suddenly? Because the education of Ireland was managed by a Board which was, more or less, and perhaps necessarily so, independent of the Government of Ireland. That Board, appointed in the year 1837, marked a distinct advance on the educational system then in existence, and it had continued on the principle that when one member died another was appointed in his place. While he believed the Board worked hard and earnestly for the good of education in Ireland, he did not disguise his opinion, speculative though it was, that it might be possible, not in this year, but in some future year, to suggest improvements on a plan framed in 1837. He, however, was not directly responsible for the Board of Education, and could not undertake to remedy this or that defect or error of judgment as it was brought before the Committee. The proper plan, when they were admittedly engaged upon another matter likely to hypothecate all their time and energies, was to reconnoitre other questions that might arise. To this end he had suggested, and he thought the suggestion would be accepted, that they should have in Ireland, to help the Treasury and himself in looking at the financial position of the matter, an expert in British education. Finance was at the bottom of the matter, and he was bound to say that he had not the time and leisure at present to go into all these considerations. As to the subjects taught at the evening continuation schools, it was not for him to defend, interpret, or even understand, the conclusions arrived at by the National Board. No doubt they had their reasons, but to ascertain those reasons he would require to be represented at the debates of the Board, and he declined to pass judgment on a decision for which he had no responsibility whatever.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) sympathised with the right hon. Gentleman in being expected to defend the action taken by a body so irresponsible, and over which he had no control whatever. These discussions were valuable, however, because they revealed to the Committee the ridiculous position in which education was placed in Ireland. It was very little consolation to be told fifty years after the creation of the Board, as their fathers were told when they made the same complaint, that there was no time to deal with its defects. The right hon. Gentleman had not touched the subjects brought forward by his hon. friends, but the debate had been useful inasmuch as in addition to showing that the National Board was an anachronism and ought to be abolished, it proved the practical grievance under which Ireland suffered in being governed by a House which for fifty years had had no time to deal with a grievance of this magnitude.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 63; Noes, 128. (Division List No. 13.)

AYES.

Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Boland, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland-
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Delany, William
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duffy, William J.
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Joyce, Michael
Law, H. Alex. (*Donegal, W.*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth South*)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, K. (*Tipperary, Mid.*
O'Donnell, T. (*Kerry, W.*)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (*Mayo, N.*)
O'Kelly, James (*Roscommon, N*
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (*Waterford*
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soares, Ernest J.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, David A. (*Merthyr*)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whitley, J. H. *Halifax*)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Channing, Francis Allston
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, H. Shepherd (*Bolton*)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gore, HnGR. C. Ormsby- (*Salop*
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hamilton, Marq. of (*Londondy*
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robt. Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashfd*
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hope, J. F. (*Sheff., B'tside*)
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Knowles, Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (*Hants*
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, David J (*Walthamstow*
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, RtHn A Graham (*Bute*
Peel, Hn. W. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (*Stalybridge*
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*
Seely, Mj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*

Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, H. C. (*Northmb. Tyneside*
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks*
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (*Oxf. Univ.*
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt Hn Sir William H.
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York, E.R.*
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson, J. W. (*Worcestersh., N*
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again to-morrow.

OUTDOOR RELIEF (FRIENDLY SOCIETIES) BILL.

[MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the chair.]

On Clause 1:—

COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince) moved to extend the scope of the measure "to any pensioner in the Army and Navy."

THE CHAIRMAN ruled that the Amendment was outside the scope of the Bill. He had referred to the original Bill and found that it related only to friendly societies. The suggested Amendment would therefore be out of order.

Bill considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time." Debate arising.

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Wednesday.

LIGHT LOCOMOTIVES (IRELAND) BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

NEW BILLS.

TRUSTEE ACT (1893) AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Trustee Act, 1893, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Galloway, Lord Hugh Cecil, Sir Charles Renshaw, and Mr. John Hutton.

TRUSTEE ACT (1893) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Trustee Act, 1893," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, and to be printed. [Bill 67.]

LIBEL.

Bill to amend the law for Libel in connection with the newspaper press, ordered to be brought in by Major Rasch, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Ernest Gray, and Mr. Strutt.

LIBEL BILL.

"To amend the law for Libel in connection with the newspaper press," presented and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 68.]

Adjourned at Five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 3rd March, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with—

Milford Docks [H.L.].

Indiarubber, Guttapercha, and Telegraph Works Company [H.L.].

Lima Railways [H.L.].

Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation [H.L.].

Life Association of Scotland [H.L.].

And that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with—

Preston and Horwich Tramways.

Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire).

Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

PRESTON AND HORWICH TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Presented, and read 1^a.

DEWSBURY, BATLEY, AND BIRSTAL TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],

HAMILTON, MOTHERWELL, AND WISHAW TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],

WAKEFIELD AND DISTRICT TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Presented, read 1^a, and referred to the Examiners.

OLD BRIDEWELL BURYING GROUND BILL [H.L.],

SOMERSET AND DISTRICT ELECTRIC POWER BILL [H.L.],

RICKMANSWORTH GAS BILL [H.L.].

Read 2^a.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Statistics of public elementary schools and training colleges, 1901–1902.

GERMANY (NEW GENERAL CUSTOMS TARIFF).

Translation of the New General Customs Tariff of Germany, with comparison, as far as possible, of the rates of Customs duty contained in the tariff with the rates at present in force on imports into Germany from the United Kindom (in continuation and completion of [C. 779.] of 1901).

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

BANKRUPTCY COURTS (IRELAND).

Returns of the official assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy, in Ireland, and the Local Courts, Belfast and Cork, for the year 1902.

RAILWAY COMPANIES POWERS ACT 1864.

Certificate of the Board of Trade authorising the Axminster and Lyme Regis Light Railway Company to raise additional capital.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT.

Annual Report on the state of the finances of the University of Aberdeen under the provisions of section 30 of the Act.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE APPOINTED.

The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee.

D. Bedford.
D. Marlborough.
D. Northumberland.
M. Lansdowne.
E. Derby.
E. Denbigh.
E. Chesterfield.
E. Jersey.*
E. Lauderdale.
E. Waldegrave.
E. Cadogan.
E. Howe.

E. Amherst.
E. Camperdown.
E. Dartrey.
E. Lytton.
E. Carrington.
E. Crewe.
V. Sidmouth.
V. Knutsford.
V. Ridley.
V. Colville of Culross.
V. Churchill.
L. Zouche of Haryngworth.
L. Barnard.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle.
(*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Colchester.
L. Poltimore.
L. Kintore.
(*E. Kintore.*)
L. Belper.
L. Brougham and Vaux.
L. Fermanagh.
(*E. Erne.*)
L. Lamington.
L. Herries.
L. Monkswell.
L. Newton.
L. Welby.
L. Ludlow.

All Petitions relating to the Standing Orders which shall be presented during the present session referred to the Committee unless otherwise ordered.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That a Standing Committee be appointed for the consideration of such Public Bills as may be committed to it by the House.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE APPOINTED.

The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:

E. Cowper.
E. Stanhope.
E. Waldegrave.
V. Colville of Culross.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle.
(*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Kintore.
(*E. Kintore.*)

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.

Select Committee appointed; the Lords following, with the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President, and the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:

D. Richmond.
D Northumberland.
M. Cholmondeley.
M. Ripon.
M. Breadalbane.
E. Clarendon.
(*L. Chamberlain.*)
E. Chesterfield
E. Waldegrave.
E. Spencer.
E. Mount Edgcumbe.
E. Cawdor.
E. Camperdown.
E. de Montalt.
E. Cranbrook.
E. Ancaster.
V. Hampden.
V. Cross.
V. Peel.
V. Knutsford.
V. Colville of Culross
V. Churchill.
L. Windsor.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle.
(*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Colchester.
L. Rosebery.
(*E. Rosebery.*)
L. Kintore.
(*E. Kintore.*)
L. Belper.
L. Rowton.
L. Tweedmouth.
L. Monk Bretton.
L. Macnaghten.
L. Welby.
L. Burghclere.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

The Lords following, viz.:

E. Chesterfield.
E. Waldegrave.
V. Colville of Culross.
L. Ribblesdale,

with the Chairman of Committees, were appointed a Committee to select and propose to the House the names of the Five Lords to form a Select Committee for the consideration of each opposed Private Bill.

OUT-DOOR RELIEF (FRIENDLY SOCIETIES) BILL (No. 8).

LIGHT LOCOMOTIVES (IRELAND) BILL (No. 9).

Brought from the Commons and read 1^a; and to be printed.

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 3rd March, 1903.

KING'S SPEECH (ANSWER TO ADDRESS.)

The Comptroller of the Household reported His Majesty's Answer to the Address, as followeth—

"*I have received with great satisfaction the loyal and dutiful expression of your thanks for the Speech with which I opened the present Session of Parliament.*"

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.—

Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Bill.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Bill.

Walker and Walsend Union Gas Bill.

Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills that, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz.—

London United Tramways Bill.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 66 NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 66 has not been complied with, viz.—

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

STROUD DISTRICT AND CHELTENHAM TRAMWAYS BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

MIDDLESBROUGH CORPORATION BILL (BY ORDER).

Read a second time, and committed.

ROMFORD AND DISTRICT TRAMWAYS

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Louis Sinclair and Mr. Price.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (TRAMWAYS AND IMPROVEMENTS).

Petition for Bill, referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Monikie; Bonhill; Dunnet; and, New Monkland; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Leytonstone; Whitechapel; and, Chelsea; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

WAGES AND EFFECTS OF DECEASED SEAMEN.

Account (presented 23rd February) to be printed. [No. 51.]

BANKRUPTCY COURTS (IRELAND)

Annual Returns presented, of the Official Assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland and the Local Courts, Belfast and Cork, for the year 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table

GERMAN TARIFF.

Copy presented, of Translation of the new General Customs Tariff of Germany, with comparison, as far as possible, of the rates of Customs Duty contained in the Tariff, with the rates at present in force on imports into Germany from the United Kingdom [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAYS (CERTIFICATES) (AXMINSTER AND LYME REGIS LIGHT RAILWAY COMPANY).

Copy presented, of Draft Certificate of the Board of Trade authorising the Axminster and Lyme Regis Light Railway Company to raise additional Capital [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN.

Copy presented, of Abstract of Accounts of the University of Aberdeen for the year ending 15th September, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 52.]

ALTERATIONS IN THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

Return presented, relative thereto (Address 27th November, 1902; *Mr. Charles M'Arthur*); to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 53.]

FOREIGN TRADE AND COMMERCE.

Return ordered, "of Accounts relating to the Trade and Commerce of certain Foreign Countries and British Possessions."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Shetland Mails—Improved Service.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the Postmaster General if, in view of the disabilities imposed upon the town of Lerwick and trade of Shetland by the present mail service, he will cause inquiry to be made in order to bring it more into harmony with the necessities and requirements of the people.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The cost of the existing mail service to the Shetland Islands is so largely in excess of the revenue from the correspondence for the Islands that the additional expenditure which would have to be incurred to provide a more frequent service would not be justifiable on postal grounds.

Health of Hong Kong—New Legislation.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Postmaster General, as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in view of the fact that some time since Mr. Osbert Chadwick, C.M.G., and Professor Simpson, M.D., were deputed to visit Hong Kong for the purpose of inquiring into the sanitary condition of the colony, will he state whether it is proposed to introduce legislative measures to consolidate and amend the Health and Building Ordinances at present in force in the colony.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain, for the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*) A Bill to consolidate and amend the laws relating to public health and buildings has been recently under consideration in the Legislative Council of Hong Kong, and will no doubt be submitted very soon for sanction.

South Africa—Criminal Procedure Code.

MR. TOULMIN (Bury, Lancashire): To ask the Postmaster General, as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in view of the fact that the Criminal Procedure Code, 1903, came into force in South Africa on 1st February, if he has now received any official information showing whether a person who is to be arrested for committing a grave crime, and who resists the arrest or attempts to escape, may be killed, if there is no other way of arresting him, and whether any police officer above the rank of sergeant may search a house without a warrant; and whether he can give the other provisions of this Ordinance.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain, for the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*) I have nothing at present to add to the answer given to the hon. Member on the 20th February,† as Lord Milner's despatch forwarding the Ordinance in question has not yet been received.

Naval Armaments—Muzzle-Loading Guns.

MR. HARMSWORTH (Caithness-shire): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what ships on the effective list of the British Navy are at present armed with muzzle-loading guns; and whether the Admiralty can see their way to have these ships removed from the effective list.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) There are no ships armed with muzzle-loading guns on the effective or fighting list of the Navy with the single exception of the "Hotspur," which is employed on special service at Bermuda, and which will be removed from the list when replaced. There are at present six older battleships whose armament is wholly or in part composed of muzzle-loading guns. These vessels are not regarded as being in the fighting list of the Fleet. Four of them are appropriated for harbour and training services, the remaining two are retained for use in a similar capacity as occasion arises. The names of the ships in question are "Alexandra," "Superb," "Hercules," "Sultan," "Monarch," and "Dreadnought." The first four carry a considerable number of breech-loading guns.

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† See page 397.

Insubordination on H.M.S. "Pembroke."

MR. HARMSWORTH: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can state whether acts of insubordination have recently occurred on H.M.S. "Pembroke," Chatham Depôt.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) There are 4,800 men on the books of the "Pembroke" and "Northumberland," and during the last three months there have been eighteen cases of insubordination. The number is exceptionally small.

Private Asylums for Incipient Mental Derangement.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): To ask Mr. Attorney General whether the Government will consider proposals to legalise in England a system similar to that which is in operation in Scotland for the private care of persons showing symptoms of incipient mental derangement who cannot be certified as insane.

(*Answered by Sir Robert Finlay.*) The Government have already assented to the principle of such legislation, and a clause dealing with the subject was contained in the Lunacy Bill of 1900. That Bill was introduced by the Lord Chancellor into the House of Lords at the beginning of the session, and was passed; it came down to the House of Commons on the 8th of March in 1900, but had to be withdrawn on the 16th of July.

Pasteur Institute for Southern India.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that it has been proposed that half of Mr. Henry Phipps' gift, intended for the Indian people generally, shall be applied to the establishment of a Pasteur Institute in Southern India; can he state whether any official sanction has been given to this scheme; and whether, before any definite decision is arrived at for the allocation of Mr. Phipps' contribution, the correspondence relating thereto will be placed before Parliament.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) I have not received any official communication on the subject from the Government of India, but I believe that, in view of the great benefits conferred on the European and the native community in India by the Pasteur Institute in the Punjab, the Viceroy proposes to apply half Mr. Henry Phipps' munificent gift to the establishment of a similar Institute in Southern India. I cannot give my hon. friend the undertaking which he asks for in the latter portion of his Question.

Irish Census—Cost of Printing.

MR. McKEAN (Monaghan, S.): to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state whether any contract was made for the printing of the Irish Census; and, if so, has the cost so f incurred been in accordance with it.

(*Answered by Mr. Hayes Fisher.*) The printing of the Irish Census was carried out partly under a general contract for book-work printing and partly under two special contracts. The cost so far incurred has been in accordance with these contracts, with two exceptions. The firm which held the general contract performed certain extra work, for which an extra payment of £1,000 was made to them. In addition, a further payment of £1,000 was made to them as an act of grace in consideration of the heavy losses which they had incurred.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Army Corps Returns.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will grant the Return standing on to-day's Notice Paper respecting the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Army Corps.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): My hon. friend asks for a Return on a date which happens to be during the Indian trooping season when regiments and drafts are on passage to and from India, and which would not therefore give an accurate return of the strength of the Army. In addition the moves consequent on the close of the South African war will not be completed till about the middle of April, which would be the earliest date on which a Return could be made which would be of any value. I will order a Return to be prepared accordingly.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: On the 15th April?

MR. BRODRICK: I cannot say precisely, but some time between the 15th April and the 1st May.

Army Intelligence Department.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what is the total number of intelligence officers serving with the British Army and with the Indian Army; and if he will state the number of such officers serving in each of the four continents.

MR. BRODRICK: The number of mobilisation and intelligence officers serving with the British Army on the headquarters staff is thirty-four. Beside these, there are a number of officers on the district staff whose staff work comprises intelligence duties. These, at home and abroad, amount to thirty-five. The number of mobilisation and intelligence officers serving with the Indian Army headquarters staff is eleven. The distribution of the above officers by continents is as follows:—Europe, fifty-five; Africa, seven; America, four; Asia, fifteen.

Army Recruiting—Enlistment of Specials Suspended.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the date on which the order directing the suspension of the enlistment of specials was in the hands of recruiting officers.

MR. BRODRICK: Owing to the constant movement of troops during the last few months it has been very difficult to arrive at exact figures as to the numbers of the Army, but on receipt of the figures for 1st February, which reached me about the middle of the month, I decided on 17th February, after consultation with the military authorities, that certain standards should be raised, and that the taking of "specials" should be stopped for the infantry. An Army Order was accordingly drafted and instructions were sent out on the 27th February.

Recruits' Characters.

SIR JOHN COLOMB: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the date and terms of the circular or order instructing officers in charge of recruiting districts to inquire into the characters of men before enlisting them.

MR. BRODRICK: If my hon. and gallant friend will refer to the recruiting regulations he will find that in the case of the Household Cavalry, Royal Engineers, Army Service Corps, Royal Army Medical Corps, and Army Ordnance Corps recruits must produce certificates of character. In the case of other corps the regulations lay down that "if a recruit presents the appearance of having served before and denies having done so, or if his antecedents are unknown or there is any doubt as to his antecedents, he should be required to give a reference to his former employer or other responsible person" and that "full inquiries as to the recruits' antecedents are to be made in every case where there is the slightest ground for suspicion."

MR. BECKETT (Yorkshire, N.R., Whitby): Is it not the fact that in a recent case when a recruiting officer made inquiries into the character of a recruit he was prohibited by some one at the War Office?

MR. BRODRICK: I never heard of it.

Inspector General of Recruiting—Annual Report.

MR. BECKETT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting for 1902 is now complete, and on what date it will be issued to the House.

MR. BRODRICK: The Report is now with the printers, and all possible despatch is being used to secure its publication at an early date. I hope to circulate it before the end of this week.

Royal Military College Regulations.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the recent new regulations at the Royal Military College in respect of leave and permission to cadets to dine out.

MR. BRODRICK: The new leave regulations for cadets at the Royal Military College are set forth in a printed pamphlet, the contents of which are too long to be included in an answer to a Question. Permission to dine out in the neighbourhood can be obtained from officers commanding companies. I shall be happy to forward the hon. Member copy of the regulations.

Coaling Stations Garrison.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state what has been the decision arrived at in respect of the garrisoning of certain coaling stations by the Navy, proposed in the Army statement of the Secretary of State for War in 1901; whether he will lay correspondence relating to this question upon the Table.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The matter was considered and it was decided to make no transfer of responsibility from the War Office to the Admiralty in respect of the garrisons of the coaling stations. There is no correspondence to lay upon the Table.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: Then are we to understand that the Army will still provide these garrisons?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: That is so.

Indian Military Charges.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can state what the decision of the Government of India has been as to the increased charge which falls upon India consequent on the new regulations for the pay of British soldiers; and, if so, when he will be prepared to lay Papers before the House.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The Secretary of State in Council, after conferring with the Government of India, has agreed to pay the extra twopence a day per head under the new regulations, but objects to paying the whole of the additional sixpence a day for men whose service is more than three years. This part of the question will be referred to arbitration, and as soon as all the details of procedure connected with the arbitration are settled I will publish the correspondence.

MR WINSTON CHURCHILL: Is the noble Lord aware that the question was raised more than a year ago?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Yes; but the new regulations only came into operation last April.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: How much money is in dispute?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: £209,000 a year.

Cost of Soldiers in India.

MAJOR EVANS-GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can state the differences in cost per man per annum, between the English and the native private soldier in India.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: An exact calculation of the annual cost of a British soldier and a native soldier in India cannot be made from the materials that are at my disposal in this country. It was, however, estimated in a Return presented to Parliament in 1894 (No. 20) that the average annual cost of a British soldier, exclusive of deferred pay and pension, was Rs.891, and that the cost of a native soldier was Rs.343. Since the date of that estimate the pay and allowances of the British soldier have been increased by about Rs.123 a year, and on the 1st April, 1904, a further increase of Rs.146 a year (sixpence a day) will come into effect. There has been an increase of about Rs.37 a year in the pay and allowances of the native soldier.

Administration of Justice in India—Cachar Tea Gardens Case.

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the case of Malsa, who with his wife and niece absconded from a tea garden in Cachar, and were caught by the estate guards and brought back; that Malsa was tied up, beaten with a stirrup leather until he became insensible, and shortly afterwards died; and to the report by the Deputy Commissioner, who presided, that the two women were then beaten by one of the chokidars (guards) with the strap; and to his remarks as to attempts to conceal the facts of the case; and will the Government of India take steps to prevent such concealment of evidence, and take steps to bring the guilty parties to justice.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I have observed a report in the newspapers of the case referred to in the hon. Member's Question. The assistant manager of the tea gardens, who is charged with causing the death of a coolie, appears to have been committed for trial by the Sessions Court.

Delhi Durbar—Imperial Responsibilities of the Indian Princes and Chiefs.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.) I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will state if any steps were taken at Delhi, on the occasion of the intercourse between the Governor General and the Princes and Chiefs of India, to invite their co-operation with his Excellency in those special responsibilities of Imperial rule within the Empire of India which are regarded as under the personal charge of the Viceroy; whether arrangements were then or have since been made to renew and give practical effect to the plan described on the occasion of the Queen Empress's Proclamation of 1877 expressing Her Majesty's desire to seek from time to time in matters of importance the counsel and advice of the Princes and Chiefs of India, pursuant to which the Order of Counsellors of the Empire was established; and whether any communications which may have taken place between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India on this subject can be laid before Parliament at an early date.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I have received no communication from the Viceroy as to any action having been taken of the nature indicated in the first and second paragraphs of the hon. Member's Question. There are therefore no Papers that could be presented.

Seistan Boundary Commission.

*MR. C. E. SCHWANN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Resolutions or other Orders of the Indian Government, defining the objects and organisation of the Seistan Arbitration Commission, now travelling through the waterless Registan desert, and also the Seistan Boundary Commission under command of Major MacMahon, can be laid before Parliament, together with estimates of the cost of the large military escort accompanying these Commissions; does the proposed boundary demarcation extend to the Persian frontiers; and, seeing that these operations are outside British India, will the expenditure incurred be borne by or debited to the Imperial Treasury; has work on the projected Quetta-Nushki-Seistan Railway already commenced; and from what funds, or under what guarantees, will that line be constructed.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: In accordance with the sixth Article of the Treaty of 1857, Major MacMahon has been deputed to proceed to the Perso-Afghan frontier to settle certain disputes which have arisen between the Persians and Afghans in Seistan regarding irrigation rights. He has also been instructed to take the opportunity of demarcating, in conjunction with a Persian Commissioner, a portion of the Perso-Baluch frontier, which was settled but not actually demarcated by a joint Anglo-Persian Commission in 1896, but regarding which some misunderstanding has recently arisen. Major MacMahon's escort consists of a troop of cavalry and two companies of infantry. I have received no estimate of the cost, but the expense will fall upon Indian revenues. I understand that the work has commenced on the line to Nushki, which will be constructed from Indian funds. I do not propose at present to lay any Papers on the Table.

Russia and Afghanistan.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now able to state in what form Russia communicated to His Majesty's Government her desire to enter into direct communication with the Amir of Afghanistan; whether the correspondence is now complete and can be presented to Parliament; and whether Russian officers have as a fact made direct communications to the Amir.

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): The communication was made by the Russian Embassy in London. The answer to the second Question is in the negative. His Majesty's Government are not aware that any direct communications have been made by Russian officers to the Amir.

Death Duties—Assessment of Publicans' Licences.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state on what principle publicans' licences are valued for the purposes of the death duties, whether the estimated selling value for the time being is taken, or what other rule is adopted; and whether he will state the highest value assigned to any licence during the last five years.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): The value, for the purposes of the death duties, of a publican's interest in licensed premises is the amount for which such interest would sell at the time of the death. No separate record has been kept of the values assigned to such interests, and it would therefore not be possible to say what is the highest value that has been taken in any single case.

Alien Criminals in the Metropolis.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, having regard to the fact that nearly 5,000 aliens were arrested by the London Metropolitan Police in the twelve months ending 31st October, 1902, he is now in a position to give the figures for the period 1st January to 31st December, 1902; and, further, if he can state how many aliens have appeared in the calendar at the Central Criminal Court, the London Sessions, the Surrey Sessions, and on the charge sheets at Metropolitan Police Courts, during the three months ending 31st January, 1903.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): No, Sir, I cannot give these figures. I beg leave to refer my hon. and gallant friend to the answers which I have already given to him on cognate points, and would ask him to believe that all trustworthy information on this matter in my possession will be given to the Royal Commission in the best form that I can devise. The hon. Member shall have a copy.

Sunderland and Durham County Blind Asylum—Labour Dispute.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the blind ship-fender makers of the Sunderland and Durham County Blind Asylum have been locked out since October last in connection with a wages dispute; and whether, seeing that the Mayor of Sunderland has offered to act as arbitrator and his offer been accepted by the men but refused by the governors of the asylum, he will use the powers conferred upon him by the Conciliation Act to have inquiries made and a Report presented on the facts of the case.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): *Primâ facie* this does not seem to be a case for the application of the Conciliation Act, but I am making inquiries.

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway—Orlando Bridge Shunting Fatality.

MR. C. E. SCHWANN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the inquest at Bolton on Mr. Peter Fulton, goods inspector in the employ of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, who was killed whilst superintending shunting operations near Orlando Bridge Station; is he aware that it was alleged at the inquest that the accident was due to taking off a flagman who was on duty to give warning of danger, and that the Company were running passenger trains over the goods line; and will the Board of Trade inquire into the accident.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Notice of this regrettable accident has been duly given by the Railway Company, and the Board of Trade have received the Coroner's Return. I am not aware of the allegations stated to have been made at the inquest. I have, however, directed an Assistant Inspecting Officer of Railways to hold an inquiry into the circumstances attending the accident.

Meat Trade—False Descriptions.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he will state whether action is being taken by the Board or the local authorities to prevent butchers selling foreign meat as home grown; if so, will he state the number of convictions and name the punishments in his last official reports; and whether he will consider the advisability of amending the law with a view to more efficient prevention of the substitution of foreign for home grown meat.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): Local authorities have no power to institute proceedings in cases where foreign meat is sold as home grown. The Merchandise Marks Act 1894 gave to the Board of Agriculture certain powers of prosecution in offences connected with agricultural or horticultural produce. Full publicity has been given to these powers, and those interested have been invited to bring specific cases under our notice. We have no staff of inspectors to detect such illegal sales, and before a prosecution can take place the consent of the Treasury has to be obtained. In the case of hams and bacon the trade association most concerned has been able to provide the expert evidence necessary to secure convictions, and proceedings have been taken in forty-one cases. Particulars of twenty of these cases appear in our Report for the year 1900, whilst the forthcoming Report for 1902 will contain those of the remaining twenty-one. In the case of fresh meat no specific complaints have reached us upon which a prosecution could possibly be based. I gather, however, from admissions made to me by members of some recent deputations that the meat of foreign animals, slaughtered at Deptford and other wharves within ten days or less of their arrival in this country, is often sold under the ambiguous description of home killed or even home grown meat—and I am now having inquiries made as to the extent of this practice. If it is at all general I think some more accurate definition of such terms may have to be provided by Statute.

*MR. ALFRED DAVIES: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will endeavour to alter the law in order to bring——

THE SPEAKER: That question has already been answered.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): Can the right hon. Gentleman see his way to remove the obstruction to a prosecution.

MR. HANBURY: I do not think that there has been any obstruction from the Treasury on that point.

*MR. ALFRED DAVIES: I should like to know whether, if I bring in a Bill of which the right hon. Gentleman approves, he will give me facilities for passing it?

MR. HANBURY: I should like to see the Bill first.

M'Farlane's Estate, County Mayo.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Mayo I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the M'Farlane Estate, in the County Tyrone, has been in the Land Judge's Court since 1882; and seeing that the tenants made an offer to buy their holdings in 1899, and their offer was accepted by the solicitor to the Receiver, will he explain why the sale has not yet been carried out.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The proceedings for the sale of this estate have been administered by Judge Meredith, Mr. Justice Ross having a personal interest in the matter. No offer to purchase on the part of the tenants was ever accepted. The negotiations for sale fell through for the reason stated in my reply to the hon. Member's previous Question of the 28th July last.†

Hon. J. Browne's Estate.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Mayo I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how long the estate of the Hon. J. Browne has been in the Land Judge's Court; and whether, seeing that the tenants on this estate signed agreements to purchase their holdings in 1899, he will explain why the solicitor to the Receiver is still pressing the tenants for their old rents; and why the sale of the estate has not been completed.

MR. WYNDHAM: The estate cannot be identified in the Land Judge's Court upon the information given in the Question. I have written a letter to the hon. Member asking him to defer the Question, and to supply some more specific information as to the locality of the estate, when further inquiry will be made.

Knocalassa Grazing Farm, Riverstown, County Sligo.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a land bailiff, named McDermott, has come into possession of the Knocalassa grazing farm, situate near Riverstown, County Sligo, which until recently was held by a Mr. Dodd, of Dublin; and whether the Land Commission will advance the purchase money of this farm to McDermott, or will consider the advisability of having it used for the enlargement of the small farms surrounding it.

MR. WYNDHAM: The estate which includes this farm is administered in the Land Judge's Court. The sale of the estate has not yet been brought before the Land Commissioners. But in any case the matter is at present solely within the discretion of the Land Judge, and the Commissioners have no duty imposed upon them such as suggested in the Question.

St. Louis Exposition—Representation of the United Kingdom.

MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will state what steps the Government are taking to insure that the United Kingdom shall be adequately represented at the Universal Exposition to be held at St. Louis in 1904.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Government have accepted the invitation of the United States Government to take part in the St. Louis Exhibition of 1904. The extent to which the country will participate, and the *modus operandi*, are under consideration.

MR. NORMAN: Will not the right hon. Gentleman at least give the House as much information on this subject as has been published, obviously on some sort of authority, in the daily papers?

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† See (4) *Dabates*, cxi., 1364.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The authority was not mine. I do not know who has given the information, and I cannot add to the answer I have given to the House. There has been no authoritative statement made to the Press.

Select Committee on Private Business.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he proposes to take the steps needful to carry into effect the recommendations of the Select Committee on Private Business (which sat last session), which are embodied in paragraphs 37, 38, and 39 of their Report.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will defer this Question till next week, as there are some points on which I should like to have an opportunity of consulting the Chairman of Committees.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS: Yes, I will put it down one day next week.

Business of the House.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Will the right hon. Gentleman say what business is to be taken in the near future?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: To-morrow the business will be the Army Supplementary Estimates, if they are not finished to-day, and the Report of the Supply taken yesterday. Then we propose to introduce Bills and appoint committees, and that business should carry us over to the end of the sitting on Thursday.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say what Bills and what committees he refers to?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Bills introduced will be the Scotch Licensing Bill, the Employment of Children Bill, and the Naval Reserve Bill—not the Education Bill, or the Irish Land Bill, or the Sugar Convention Bill.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Scotch Bill will not be introduced under what is called the ten-minutes rule?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I will consult the Lord Advocate as to that. If the right hon. Gentleman desires to have a more lengthened discussion, it can be managed. The committees that are to be moved for are the National Expenditure Committee and the Municipal Trading Committee.

Sir JOHN COLOMB: When are the Army and Navy Estimates likely to come on?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: These Estimates will be brought on early next week. The Army Estimates will be taken first.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: Having regard to the fact that the Motion with regard to Volunteers only secured second place in the ballot, can the right hon. Gentleman afford some facilities for the discussion of this very important subject?

Mr. BRODRICK: We propose to pursue the ordinary practice in discussing the Army Estimates.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had selected the following six Members to be the Chairmen's Panel and to serve as Chairmen of the two Standing Committees to be appointed under Standing Order No. 47:—Mr. John Ellis, Sir Thomas Esmunde, Sir James Fergusson, Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, Mr. Laurence Hardy, and Mr. Stuart Wortley.

Report to lie upon the Table.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee:—Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Baird, Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Gerald Balfour, Mr. Beckett, Mr. Boland, Mr. Griffith Boscawen, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Burt, Sir Charles Cayzer, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Channing, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Jesse Collings, Sir John Colomb, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Crombie, Mr.

Dillon, Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Doughty, Mr. Farrell, Sir Fortescue Flannery, Sir Henry Fowler, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Garfit, Sir Alfred Hickman, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir James Joicey, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Bonar Law, Sir Elliott Lees, Mr. Lloyd-George, Colonel Long, Mr. Walter Long, Mr. Charles M'Arthur, Dr. MacDonnell, Mr. William M'Killop, Sir William Mather, Mr. W. J. Maxwell, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Parkes, Mr. Pike Pease, Colonel Pilkington, Sir James Rankin, Sir Charles Renshaw, Mr. Herbert Roberts, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Round, Mr. Runciman, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Stuart Samuel, Sir Henry Seton-Karr, Mr. Thomas Shaw, Sir Barrington Simeon, Sir Edward Strachey, Mr. Talbot, Mr. Theodore Taylor, Mr. Tennant, Mr. Whitley Thomson, Sir William Tomlinson, Mr. Tully, Mr. George Whitley, Colonel Williams, Sir Frederick Wills, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. Wolff, and Mr. Samuel Young.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee:—The Lord Advocate, Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Atkinson, Mr. Barlow, Sir George Bartley, Mr. Butcher, Mr. Carew, Lord Hugh Cecil, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Coghill, Mr. Colston, Mr. Cripps, Mr. Bromley-Davenport, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Tatton Egerton, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Samuel Evans, Sir George Fardell, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Vicary Gibbs, Sir Frederick Godson, Mr. Goulding, Mr. H. D. Greene, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Harwood, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. James Heath, Mr. Helder, Mr. Hemphill, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. John Hutton, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Lees Knowles, Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Sir Joseph Leese, Mr. Lloyd Morgan, Mr. Loder, Mr. A. K. Loyd, Mr. Lyttleton, Mr. MacNeill, Mr. Middlemore, Mr. William Moore, Mr. Arthur Morton, Mr. Newdigate, Captain Norton, Sir Francis Sharpe Powell, Lieutenant-Colonel Pryce-Jones, Sir Robert Reid, Mr. Remnant, Mr. Matthew White Ridley, Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. Parker Smith, Mr. Soames, Mr. Solicitor General, Sir Ernest Spencer, Mr. Stevenson, Sir Benjamin Stone, Mr. Thornton, Mr. Ure, Sir Howard Vincent, Mr. Robert Wallace, Mr. Whitley, and Sir James Woodhouse.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee; That, in pursuance of the provisions of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, they had selected the following fifteen Members to form the Parliamentary Panel of Members of this House to act as Commissioners:—Mr. Emmott, Mr. John Edward Gordon (Elgin), Mr. Charles Hobhouse, Mr. Alfred Hutton, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. A. K. Loyd, Mr. MacCrae, Mr. Pym, Sir Charles Renshaw, Mr. Abel Smith, Mr. Parker Smith, Sir Walter Thorburn, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. John Wilson (Falkirk), and Mr. Wylie.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

"To enable local authorities to adopt the provisions of the Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act, 1896," presented by Captain Jessel; supported by Mr. Hay, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Sir Seymour King, Sir Blundell Maple, Mr. Sinclair, Major Rasch, Mr. Freeman-Thomas, and Mr. Wanklyn; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 69.]

CRIMINAL ALIENS BILL.

"To exclude and deport Criminal Aliens," presented by Sir Howard Vincent; supported by Mr. Forde Ridley, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Plummer, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Harry Samuel, Sir Blundell Maple, Mr. Vicary Gibbs, and Major Rasch; to be read a second time upon Friday 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 70.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1902-3.

CLASS II.

£3,700 (Supplementary), Colonial Office.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said he desired to call attention for a few minutes to one item contained in the Estimate—the item covering the further expenses incurred in connection with the Colonial Premiers' Conference. He did not oppose the Vote; on the contrary he entirely approved it. But he wished to remind the Committee of the very great importance of this Conference. It was a Conference of the Premiers of the self-governing colonies and it was called by the Colonial Secretary to consider some difficult and delicate questions of Imperial government. As the debates of the House showed, the Government had many difficult questions to settle in connection with the Empire, but he believed there were none more difficult and delicate or important than those concerning our relations with the self-governing colonies. So far as the Crown colonies were concerned—so far as India and our other dependencies were affected—that House was the absolute master; it had only to settle the policy, and there was no authority to interfere with its decision. But with reference to the self-governing colonies the position was entirely different. They had been told by a spokesman of the Government in that House that the self-governing colonies were in point of fact independent—that they were sister nations bound to us by a tie which was purely sentimental and extremely slight, and that, slight though it was, we would not bind them by it for a single moment longer than they desired. That was a view expressed perhaps in terms a little too unguarded on the part of the Government. But the chief question between ourselves and our colonies was that of Imperial defence. The self-governing colonies were daily and yearly increasing in population and in wealth; they stood in the proportion, he believed, of one to four, and if they continued to increase at their present rate—if to their number were added the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony—the numerical proportion would be largely altered. The first fact that stared them in the face was that the United Kingdom has expressly undertaken to defend—with its Army and Navy—all those self-governing colonies, and while they did that, the annual charge on their Votes was increasing by leaps and bounds. The self-governing Colonies practically contributed nothing to the cost of services the benefits of which they shared equally with ourselves. That very fact was the *raison d'être* of the Conference. Since the original Estimate for the cost of that Conference was passed, the Conference itself had been held and had become an accomplished fact. They had the results before them in a Blue-book, which he might be permitted to say—although it was not very artistically or systematically arranged—was of enormous interest, value and importance. He wished to ask the Committee to consider the action of the Government in the management of the Conference, and their possible action in connection with its results. In the Blue-book they had, in the first place, the deliberate and formal statements carefully made by various members of His Majesty's Government in respect of matters of policy, while in the second place they had the results of the Conference in the Resolutions passed by the Premiers. But unfortunately they had not one single word of the speeches made or the reasons given by the Colonial Premiers in answer to the statements on the other side, and in that respect the Blue-book was deprived of much of its value. It was always possible for them to elicit the views of the Government on questions of policy, but they had no power of getting at the opinions of the great self-governing colonies, and the ground on which they based their views on the various questions discussed at the Conference.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Order, order! In this matter I am guided by a great number of precedents, in which it has been laid down that questions of policy should not be discussed on a Supplementary Vote.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he had no desire to discuss questions of policy. He wished simply to direct the attention of the Committee to the results of the Conference and to the administration by the Government of the expenditure in connection with it. He was commenting on the imperfect and defective nature of the Blue-book, in so far as it failed to give the speeches and opinions of the Colonial Premiers. He took it, however, that the resolutions passed at the Conference were the resolutions of the Colonial Premiers, and that the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who presided, was in no way committed by them. But they had a right to know what action the Government proposed to take in consequence of the resolutions. There was a preliminary question of great importance on which he desired information. A very important resolution touching the political relations between the self-governing colonies and the mother country was unanimously adopted on the Motion of the representative of New Zealand. It was to the effect that it would be to the advantage of the Empire if conferences were held, as far as practicable, at intervals not exceeding four years, at which questions of common interest affecting the relations of the mother country with her dominions over the seas could be discussed and considered by the Colonial Secretary and the Premiers of the self-governing colonies, the Secretary of State being requested accordingly to arrange for such conferences after communication with the Prime Ministers of the respective colonies. He was not proposing to discuss that question, but he did want to know if the Government had considered the point, and at what conclusion they had arrived in regard to it. It was a proposal that these conferences should become a permanent element in the constitution of the Empire, and once this country authoritatively declared that it wished it should be so it made a very important step towards the consolidation of the Empire.

The only other point on which he wished to say a few words was as to what was the net result of that important Imperial experiment as revealed to them by the Blue-book. What were the great points considered by the Conference? The first was the question of naval defence and the contribution of the self-governing colonies towards the cost of it. Next came the question of the military defence of the Empire, and the proposed colonial contribution, and thirdly there was the question of the commercial relations between the mother country and the self-governing colonies. In regard to the Navy most clear and specific declarations of policy were laid before the Conference on behalf of the Admiralty. It was pointed out what was the real function of the Navy in Imperial defence, and how it served the whole Empire—the self-governing colonies as well as Ireland, Scotland, and England. A suggestion was made without any hesitation on the part of the Admiralty—in the clearest possible terms—that the self-governing colonies should make some proportionate contribution to the expenses of this enormous and mighty Imperial armament. The Admiralty took up exactly the same attitude as many hon. Members had taken in years past, and had been severely censured for it, but he had nothing but praise for the Admiralty statement. He might, indeed, be allowed to go further and say that it had been a source of the greatest gratification to him to read what had occurred at the Conference on that point. The net result of the Conference, he gathered, had been a suggestion that the self-governing colonies should contribute something like a proportionate part of the cost of naval defence. The Cape Premier proposed to increase the Cape contribution to £50,000 a year, without condition, while the Natal Premier in the same spirit proposed to increase his colony's contribution to £30,000.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): £35,000.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he gladly accepted the correction; but he gathered from what he had seen in the newspapers that communications which had passed since the Conference had indicated a desire on the part of those in authority in Cape Colony and Natal to increase the figures mentioned at the Conference, and he would like to know if the right hon. Gentleman had any information to give the House on that subject. The second point he desired to raise was as to the Australasian squadron. He understood that it was to be increased, and that the payments both of this country and of the Australasian Colonies were to be increased, while the conditions as to localisation were to be mitigated to some extent. Still it was to remain a local squadron; it was to be what in the opinion of naval philosophers was a naval heresy; it was to be more or less detached from the British Navy to which it properly belonged. Had the Government been parties to the draft agreement which appeared in the Blue-book, and were they committed to it? He trusted that they were. Next, he had to ask if the Government had any information as to the course of the proceedings in the Australian colonies with reference to that draft agreement. The proposals shadowed forth in the resolutions of the Colonial Premiers had been under discussion for some months: had the Government any information as to the likely course of legislation on the subject?

On that point he thought the House and the country might be interested to have further and better information. The appeal to Canada had met with no response. On the first and most important head of the subjects submitted to this great Imperial assembly there was a small increase on the part of the South African colonies, a small conditional increase on the part of Australia, but nowhere near a *pro rata* proportionate contribution, and there was nothing whatever on the part of Canada. In point of fact, from the figures submitted in this paper itself it was calculated that the contribution of the self-governing colonies to the Imperial Navy, which cost this country something like 16s. per head, was 4d. per head, and that, he thought, was a fabulous 4d. because it took into account the Australian contribution, which was not a real contribution.

He would now say a word on the question of military defence. So far as he was concerned he could not venture to express in the same terms as he did in the case of the Admiralty his assent to the statements made on behalf of the Army. He could not reconcile the statement made on behalf of His Majesty's Government by Lord Selborne with the statement, equally made on behalf of the Government, by the Secretary of State for War. They appeared to him to be founded on wholly different theories and ideas. The question he wished to put on that head was this: when this Conference was called upon to discuss Imperial defence, was it in any way inspired, or regulated, or governed, or guarded by the Committee of Defence, which they had been told so often had special care of Imperial defence? What part did the Committee of Defence take in the proceedings of this Conference, and if it took any part how did it explain the discrepancy—the logical discrepancy at all events—between the theories of defence on behalf of the Army and those on behalf of the Navy submitted to the Colonial Premiers? This much was clear from the statement made by the Secretary of State for War, that whether under the old system or under the new system—whether under the Army Corps system or under the previous one—a very large proportion of the Regular Army of this country was held not for the purpose of the local defence of those islands at all, but for the purpose of Imperial defence in the possible benefits of which all the self-governing colonies were entitled to have a share. That was true no doubt, and it was certainly clearly to be inferred from the statement made. If so, obviously the same question of the colonial contribution arose in regard to the Army that had for so many years arisen in regard to the Navy. If we had, or were going to have an Imperial Army on Navy lines for the defence of the Empire, then the question immediately arose, ought not the self-governing colonies to pay any proportionate share of the very enormous expense of that Imperial Army? Proposals were made by the Secretary of State for War—he was referring to the contents of the Report simply—not in the same form as the naval demand, but they were really the same in substance. He asked them if they would guarantee a certain portion of their own local Militia —if they would undertake to set that aside.

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I think the hon. Member is directing his remarks to matters outside the Conference.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he wa dealing with the proceedings of the Conference, which they were paying for now.

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I understood that the hon. Gentleman was referring to certain remarks made by the Secretary of State for War.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he was referring to the Report. "Remarks" would be a very derogatory word to apply to the great State paper which was now laid before them. He did not wish to dwell upon it, but he thought that for the information of the House he might be allowed to say that what the Secretary of State proposed was that instead of making any contribution in money, which was the Admiralty demand, the colonies should undertake to set aside part of their local force under the name of an Imperial Reserve, with a fee of so much per head, which this country was to contribute. Whether it was due to the unfortunate terms in which the case of the War Office was presented, or whether the colonial representatives were confused and dazzled by the contradictory representations made to them he did not know, because the Report did not tell them, but the proposals were rejected. That was why he emphasised at the beginning the fact that they had before them statements made on behalf of his Majesty's Government in full detail, but they had no corresponding statements on behalf of the colonial representatives. It was a great misfortune that the Committee had to content themselves with the bald statement of the results of the Conference as expressed in the resolutions of the Premiers. These were to be found on page 32 in regard to the Army. They would find from these resolutions that the proposals of the Government on this point were substantially rejected by the Premiers; but the Committee did not know the reasons. There was one reason mentioned, but they did not know the detailed reasons. They had not a report of the speeches in which the colonial Premiers put forward their views.

The Secretary of State for War failed more completely than the first Lord of the Admiralty did. He seemed to have failed entirely to carry the Conference with him, and the result was nothing less than what he regarded as the positive rejection of all his proposals to induce the self-governing colonies to come into the scheme of Imperial defence so far as the Army was concerned. But there was just room for a little doubt which the right hon. Gentleman might possibly be able to remove. The Members of the Colonial Conference refused to pass any resolution in favour of the scheme proposed, but they referred each colony to the Secretary of State for War to see if any agreement special to it could be come to. He asked the right hon. Gentleman whether anything had followed from this—whether any proposal had been made on behalf of any colony apart from the Conference altogether. Had any single colony come forward and said "Although the whole body will not come into the scheme we, as an individual colony, are willing to come into it, and are willing to make our local militia part of the Imperial defensive force?" He thought the Committee ought to have some information from the Government on that point. One of the most interesting papers contained in the proceedings of the Conference was to be found on page 43. That paper was laid before the Colonial Premiers by the Government. It was called the Canadian, Australian and New Zealand contributions to the war. The complaint he had to make about it was that in this House during the summer of last year some Members of the House, he himself certainly for one, endeavoured to obtain this information from the Secretary of State for War, and it was repeatedly refused on behalf of the Government. But although it was refused to the House it was given voluntarily to the Colonial Premiers. Apparently it was pressed upon their consideration in the form in which it appeared in the Blue-book. At the time this paper was prepared the total expense of the war to this country was £222,000,000. That had been vastly increased since the time when the Conference met. He was quite sure that the people of this country did not realise that, in spite of the almost official manner in which many of these great colonies took up the policy of this country, and denounced all those in this country who disapproved of that policy, their contribution to this great Imperial War for which we had paid £250,000,000 was less than £2,000,000 altogether.

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am obliged to remind the hon. Gentleman that the cost of the war cannot possibly be discussed on this Vote.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: No, no, what I was discussing was the paper.

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I understood the hon. Gentleman to be discussing the cost of the War.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he was discussing the results of the Conference, and this was one of the papers which had been laid before the Conference. He would not pursue the matter, but he wished to know why that was given to the Conference which was refused to the House. He hoped he might be in order in asking that. He thought he was entitled to ask further—was any proposal put before the Conference that they should pay an increased contribution to the War? If that was not part of the proceedings he failed to see why this paper was produced. Surely he was entitled to ask why this formidable document was laid before the Conference on the part of the Government. Was it to support an appeal that they should pay for this Imperial war in South Africa in proportion to their strength, numerically or otherwise? There was one other point on which he wished to touch, and he trusted that he would not go beyond the limit assigned by the Deputy-Chairman in discussing those Estimates. He asked the Committee to consider for a moment what the resolution of the Conference was on the subject of their commercial relations with this country. It was not known what they decided about the Navy or the Army, or what they said about the war; but on this question of commercial relations there was not the slightest dubiety. And the matter was so grave and so important that the Committee was bound to have some explanation from the Government as to their attitude with regard to these proposals. The net result might be stated thus: the Colonial Premiers, whom he was distinguishing all through from the Colonial Secretary, on matters of trade laid down the rule, first of all, that there should be no Free Trade within the Empire. Their second proposition—and this they made promise to recommend to their people—was that the various self-governing colonies should give preferential treatment to the goods manufactured by the mother country. And, in the third place, they prayed the Government of this country to give a corresponding preferential treatment to the goods from their respective colonies. There was to be no Free Trade, but mutual preferential duties between the mother country and the self-governing colonies. And that was the line taken in *The Times* by a gentleman who was not a political representative, but a certain representative of public opinion in Canada. Of course he was not entitled to discuss that as a matter of policy, but it would be a tremendous reversal of our historical policy on matters essential to the well-being of the United Kingdom; and he thought there ought not to be any doubt at all as to the attitude of the Government on that point. This was a Conference appointed by the Government themselves, and here was the result, and the House of Commons was left in doubt as to whether the Board of Trade was a party to this resolution or not—on which the Colonial Premiers were most serious and most emphatic. He thought that they ought to have, as far as possible, some declaration on behalf of the Government as to whether they had in any way assented to these propositions. He hoped he had kept within the ruling of the Deputy Chairman, but he was certain he had not alluded to anything but what was of the greatest and most material importance in the report.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said that the strict question under discussion was the desirability, or otherwise, of the prolongation of this Colonial Conference, but it really seemed to him that it opened up a very serious matter. These Conferences were rather dangerous experiments. Let the Committee consider what they were. They had no official power, no official form; their decisions amounted to no more than pious opinions, and whatever resolutions they might come to had no binding effect whatever on the various colonies. Under these circumstances he failed to see the use of them. The discussions might have been instructive if only the Committee had had full reports of what had been said, but if they had only a report of the formal utterances of the Colonial Secretary, the Secretary of State for War, and the First Lord of the Admiralty, and not a word of what, after all, was the only interesting point of the proceedings, the speeches made by the Colonial Premiers, then the instructive value of the whole thing entirely disappeared. The Conference, as such, had no power, no authority to bind any one of the colonies. Each Premier had no power to bind his own colony, much less had all of them power to bind all the colonies. It was impossible, therefore, for the Conference to come to any coherent plan, or any plan at all. He thought that, although these Conferences entirely lacked the serious element of a formal body, there was considerable danger that the Colonial Premiers should come to them, and that the colonial people who read of them might take them seriously, and might imagine them to be a kind of Imperial Council or Imperial Parliament capable of coming to conclusions, and of having those conclusions carried out. That was a great danger. They could not put up an imitation body like this Conference and pretend that it was something real.

He would not traverse ground already covered, which referred to very serious and very important matters; but in regard to the subjects of defence and trade, he would point out that no conclusions of the slightest importance were reached by the Conference. Suggestions were certainly made, and opinions, diverse opinions, were expressed; but on account of the character of the Conference, no conclusions could be reached. It was said that by these Conferences they might always come to an entirely separate treatment between each separate colony and this country; but it required no Conference for this country to adopt one treatment of one colony, another treatment of another colony, and a third of a third colony. On the contrary, a Conference interfered with that mode of treatment. What had they got? In the case of defence the colonies did not contribute a fortieth part of the cost of the Navy. There was a contribution for the Navy from the Cape and Natal, but what was £75,000 out of £30,000,000? It was true that if the colonial contribution were capitalised, it would amount to the cost of an iron clad; but then our contributions were not capitalised. As a matter of fact the contribution of South Africa was infinitesimal; and the contribution on the part of Australia was no contribution at all. He had a number of papers from Australia which showed that they were very much occupied with the question of the Fleet and said—

> "We do not like the conditions under which we make a small contribution to the British Navy. What we mean is to have a Navy of our own, and to have nothing to do with yours."

This sentiment was put in a very crude form by one of the Australian papers—

> "Australia means to order now a cock-hat of her own."

The contributions from the colonies did not amount to much; he would go further and say that it could not amount to much. We must take upon our own shoulders the whole cost of the Navy, for we would never get any material contribution in cash or in meal or in malt to our expenses for defence from the self-governing colonies. Their conditions were different from ours. They were forced to put very heavy duties on imports, and we could not expect to have contributions from them for the Navy, the Army, or in any other form. [AN HON. MEMBER: You derive from Canada a contribution in the shape of preferential tariffs.] Yes, but he should like to know what that amounted to?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN said he hoped the hon. Gentleman would respect the ruling he had given. He could not go into questions of policy on this Vote; that could be done when the main Estimates came on a short time hence.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES submitted that he was strictly dealing with the policy of prolonging the Conference—the business of which was to discuss whether we could or could not get contributions from the colonies. His argument was that the Conference was useless, and its prolongation was worse than useless. His point was that these Conferences were not harmless, as they were represented to be, but that there was an element of danger in them. If ever they were to have another Conference, they should have a full report of what took place, and not a one-sided report of what the Colonial Secretary or the Secretary for War or the First Lord of the Admiralty said.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) said that in regard to the ruling which the Deputy Chairman had given, that the Committee could not discuss questions of policy on the Supplementary Estimates, was not it a rule that the Committee could not discuss questions of policy which might have arisen on the original Estimates? but, if between the original Estimates and the Supplementary Estimates a new question arose such as the result of the prolongation of the Conference, could not the policy arising out of that prolongation, as shown in this particular document, be discussed?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN said that the sum for the Colonial Conference in the original Estimates was £3,000, and an additional sum of £1,500 was asked for to make up the cost of the Conference, on which a new discussion on policy did not arise.

SIR ROBERT REID said that all he would point out was that this was the first time that they had had the Blue-book before them, and therefore its contents could not have been precedently discussed.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN said that the Blue-book had been printed after the original Estimates had been issued, but according to all the precedents the policy of which the Blue-book was the subject must be discussed when the main Vote came before the Committee.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he wished to ask whether on the Vote they were asked to pass that day it was or was not competent to discuss the contents of the Blue-book.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said he should like to ask the Deputy Chairman specifically whether the debate would be in order if continued at the point raised by the hon. Member who opened it—viz., on the declarations made by the Government at the Conference. He submitted that the Committee would not have an opportunity of discussing these except on the present occasion. He submitted, on a point of order, that there would be no further opportunity of discussing the declarations of the Government themselves.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The proper time for the discussion of the question of policy is on the Vote for the Colonial Secretary's salary. Then the whole question of policy can be discussed. I am very reluctant to lay down a ruling of my own, but, by the rulings of my predecessors, I am quite clear that the question of policy cannot be now discussed.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said the policy of the Colonial Secretary could no doubt be discussed on his salary, but the declarations made by the Secretary of State for War and by the Admiralty could not be discussed except they were discussed separately on different items, which would be extremely inconvenient.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he would remind the Chairman of the ruling of Mr. Speaker Peel, which was that although on Supplementary Estimates the policy underlying the original Estimates could not be discussed, nevertheless a Supplementary Estimate might be such as, from its amount, or from any other circumstance, to raise in itself a question of policy.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is not quite a similar case. All Ministers have salaries, and, therefore, any question affecting them can be discussed on the Votes for their salaries.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he put his suggestion as a matter of convenience.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he would strictly observe the ruling of the Chair. He thought the Committee would see that there were obvious difficulties in discussing in the Conference held last year the policy of the Government in relation to both the Naval and Military services, the whole trade relations of the Empire, and the administration of the Colonial Office at large. Many matters of great importance were raised at the Conference; but he thought the questions which were really germane to the Vote were not so much the views expressed by the Colonial Premiers who attended, or of Members of His Majesty's Government who were present, as the questions raised by his hon. friend the Member for Kings Lynn as to whether such conferences should be held, and that raised by the hon. and learned Member for Dundee as to whether they should be repeated. He would begin by clearing away one misapprehension which he thought existed in the minds of some hon. Members who had spoken, and which could only have arisen from an imperfect reading of the Blue-book. The hon. and learned Member for Dundee and his hon. friend made it a matter of serious complaint that the views of Ministers were printed at length, although they had little or no interest for his hon. friend [Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Not at all.] while the matter which would have interested him, namely, the arguments put forward and the language used by the Colonial Premiers was not reported in the Blue-book. It would have been the wish of the Secretary of State and of His Majesty's Government to have published the whole proceedings of the Conference if they could; and, for himself, he thought it would have been useful, not only for the information of the people of this country but also for the information of people in the colonies, if the views expressed by the Colonial Premiers had been fully published in the official report of the proceedings. At the commencement of the Conference, in accordance with precedent, it was agreed that the proceedings should, for the time being, be treated as confidential, in order that everyone might be at liberty to express with perfect freedom his opinions, and discuss with absolute fulness and care the various questions which might arise, and that no publication should take place without the assent of those who had taken part in the proceedings. This was stated in the very first page of the summary of the proceedings. When the Conference came to an end the question of the publication of the proceedings was discussed, and it was feared that some of the members of the Conference were adverse to that course being taken. If there was lurking in any hon. Member's mind a suspicion that the Government had suppressed for purposes of their own—

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that nothing was further from his intention than to suggest anything of the kind.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he was extremely glad to hear it; but he had in his mind a complaint which was made by a journal, for which of course the hon. and learned Member was not responsible, that the Government had kept back that part of the proceedings. He thought that the great stress which was laid by the hon. and learned Member on the absence of the speeches of the Colonial Premiers was calculated, though not intended, to renew or perpetuate a misunderstanding which would have been mischievous in this country, and infinitely more mischievous in the colonies, if it were thought the views of the representatives of the colonies had been suppressed.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he never saw the suggestion.

MR AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said of course he would accept the hon. and learned Gentleman's statement that there was no misapprehension in his mind, and that it was very far from his intention to convey such an opinion to anyone else. But he thought the hon. and learned Member would not blame him, as there had been such a misapprehension, for stating in the clearest and most emphatic terms that the Secretary of State and His Majesty's Government would have been very glad to have published full reports of the whole proceedings, and that the somewhat truncated form in which the report was published was due, not to the wishes of His Majesty's Ministers, but of other members of the Conference.

The hon. and learned Gentleman asked him what were the intentions of the Government as to calling such a Conference on a future occasion. If he understood the hon. and learned Gentleman aright he thought that the periodical recurrence of such Imperial Conferences would have the best effect, and would form a new link in our Imperial chain. His hon. and learned friend the Member for Kings Lynn thought that the Conferences were dangerous, and fruitless of good result, and that the summoning of any future Conference had better be avoided. In that matter, he agreed with the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, and not with his hon. friend. He believed that view to be generally shared by all who had most closely followed the recent history of our Imperial relations; and he believed that those Conferences contained a germ which might blossom into the most fruitful possibilities in the future. They offered an opportunity for bringing together those responsible for the administration of the King's great self-governing colonies and responsible Ministers of the day in this country for a personal interchange of views on all the great questions which arose between the colonies and this country, and questions which affected the harmonious relations of one part of the Empire with another, upon the satisfactory and amicable settlement of which depended the future of the Empire itself. That was the opinion of the Government, and, without committing themselves to the specific period of four years, His Majesty's Government were certainly of opinion that periodical Conferences of this kind should be summoned regularly to discuss matters of common interest to the whole Empire. They could only be productive of great good, and they bore with them great hopes for a closer and more intimate connection between the Empire at large, a greater assimilation of our Imperial interests, and a better understanding between all parts of His Majesty's dominions. He said that, in spite of the fact that, as his hon. friend pointed out, the resolutions of the Conference were binding on no one. They were the opinions of those present on certain subjects which had been discussed, and were undertakings by certain of the Colonial Premiers present that they would make definite proposals to their own Parliaments. Of course they had no more authority to bind their own Parliaments than His Majesty's Ministers had to bind this Parliament; but they involved an indication of what the Premiers thought might fairly and properly be submitted to their respective Parliaments, and of what they might hope their Parliaments would agree to.

He was referred to certain newspaper paragraphs which, if he had seen them, he had not in his mind at the present moment. He was asked whether he could add anything to the statement of the results as regarded naval and military contributions contained in the Blue-book. Communications had been passing between the Ministers concerned here and some of the Colonial Governments on this subject, but he had nothing to add to the statements which were summarised in the Blue Book; and he had at present no reason to suppose that further contributions were likely to be offered, though, of course, they would be the first to welcome them if such action were taken spontaneously by the Governments concerned. The two hon. Gentlemen who had spoken had each of them, in respect to the domain of naval and military expenditure, rather belittled the results of the Conference, and had emphasised how small a proportion of Imperial Naval and Military expenditure was represented even by the increased Colonial contributions which the Premiers undertook at the Conference to recommend to their respective Governments. He deprecated the spirit in which both hon. Gentlemen looked at the matter. The great Colonies with their own representative institutions were in truth sister nations practically independent of the country and bound to it by a tie of which it might perhaps be true to say, as the hon. and learned Gentleman said, that if viewed by a lawyer through a lawyer's spectacles it was extremely slight; yet it was a tie of sentiment and affection which had proved of great value to them in recent years, and which he believed, if met by a similar spirit in this country, would stand any strain that future events were likely to put upon it. He thought first of the assistance of all these great self-governing Colonies in the great Imperial War that they had just waged. After they had found troops from all the

King's dominions fighting side by side with the troops sent out from this country it was a bad moment to choose to seek to minimise the service they had performed. He did not wish to be understood as expressing an opinion on behalf of the Government that the proportion of expenditure which this country bore to that which the Colonies bore could always, or ought, always to be maintained, but if there was a change it would have to come as a free and spontaneous offer from the colonies and not from any attempt upon our part to impose a greater contribution upon them. The Colonial Secretary had never hesitated to put this subject clearly and frankly before the Colonial Governments and the colonial people themselves, both in and out of the Conference. But applications upon this subject were, he ventured to think, better made direct to the colonies than in the form of a complaint to that House of how little the Colonies were doing, or in the form of a grudging criticism of what they had accomplished.

What had resulted from the experience of recent years, due in no small degree to these Colonial Conferences, had been a better appreciation on the part of the colonies of the great burden which rested on the shoulders of the people of Great Britain; a greater appreciation of how Imperial, in the truest sense of the word, was the task we were discharging, and how intimately in that respect were the best interests of the colonies bound up with ours. If a proper appreciation of those things was spreading that was no small achievement in itself and gave good ground for hope that if the results attained were not great in quantity or equally spread over all the great self-governing colonies, yet what had been hitherto achieved had been in the right direction, and they might look forward with hope to a still greater extension in the future. He would not say more—in fact, within the ruling of Mr. Deputy-Chairman he could not say more upon the subject of naval and military defence. So far as those subjects required any further discussion they would have to be discussed on the Naval and Military Estimates, and the policy expounded by the Ministers at the Colonial Conference must be defended by those Ministers in that House. There was one specific matter to which, perhaps, he ought to refer. The hon. and learned Gentleman opposite had referred to the trade relations of the Empire, and had asked whether His Majesty's Government was bound by that resolution. He had already told the Committee what the effect of that resolution was generally with regard to all the Governments concerned. Any Government, from whichever side of the House it was chosen, would have to deal necessarily, most conscientiously and with the utmost consideration with any resolution coming from a body of the character of the late Colonial Conference, but this resolution was not binding on the Government, and the particular clause to which the hon. and learned Gentleman had referred was expressly put forward in the names of the Prime Ministers of the colonies and not in the name of the Conference as a whole. He had now dealt with all the points which had been raised, so far as they could be dealt with within the limits of that debate and he was certain the Committee at large would be of opinion that these Conferences were not without valuable results with regard to our future relations with our colonies.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) thought the Committee would endorse the opinion expressed by the right hon. Gentleman as to the attitude which that Committee ought to adopt with regard to the proposals contained in the Blue-books. It had to be remembered that great delicacy and caution was necessary in dealing with matters of that kind. There was one striking illustration of the arguments brought to bear by one of our colonies years ago when it was sought to make them pay a larger contribution to the Imperial expenditure than they were willing to bear. It would be as well, perhaps, to bear that in mind. In the last few months there had been most authoritative expressions of opinion by the Premiers of our self-governing colonies. It was perfectly true that the Colonial Secretary was not a party to the adoption of the resolution. The right hon. Gentleman's real position was that of President of the Conference to enable others to inculcate their views, and he very properly took no part in the vote for this resolution. But the resolution was unanimously adopted, and as an authoritative expression of opinion from the highest authorities concerned deserved a little more consideration with regard to the question of preferential trading. The question of how much we should endeavour to obtain in the way of a cash contribution towards the naval and military establishment was a very delicate matter to touch on. The Colonial Premiers resolved that a system of preferential trading should be carried out by which colonial produce should receive favoured terms, and that they should give in return these services. Canada gave 25 per cent. preference to British goods, and after a brief experience extended that preference to 33⅓ per cent. That was a *bonâ fide* Government act which showed that Canada was earnest in her convictions, and he was sorry to see that a tendency had been developed to mimimise and detract from the important success of that attempt. The result was that we had been receiving one-third of the duties and giving nothing in return. He had told Sir Wilfrid Laurier that this was like a man who constantly dined out six or seven nights a week, but never gave even a mutton chop in return.

All the other colonies had unanimously concurred in the general principle. The criticism that Canadian trade with countries other than the British Empire had relatively increased to a larger extent was by no means as conclusive as some assumed it to be. The tariff, of course, applied in the case of the United Kingdom and the—

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman is transgressing the ruling I gave just now. He cannot go into the policy of the trade relations with different colonies.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER said he would confine himself to the contents of the Blue-book.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It would not be in order to discuss the Blue-book at this stage. That must come on when the Vote for the Colonial Office is under discussion.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER said he would not pursue the subject further, as the present afforded an opportunity for only a truncated discussion on the document which had been placed in their hands.

Vote agreed to.

CLASS V.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,016,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for sundry Colonial Services, including a Grant-in-Aid:"

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) called attention to the item of £1,000,000 as a grant-in-aid of the local revenues of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony. The note attached to the Estimate stated that the sum was required

> "To meet the cost of maintenance of South African Constabulary in excess of 6,000, until the strength of the force can be reduced to that number."

The original Vote was for 6,000 constabulary, at a cost of £1,800,000, or at the rate of £300 per man per annum, so that the Committee were now apparently asked to vote the money for an additional 3,300 men for the whole year, or for a proportionately larger number for a shorter period. He did not object to the number of the men. It would no doubt be satisfactorily explained that the increase in number was counterbalanced by the withdrawal of so many military, and the more the force in South Africa was assimilated to a civil police force the better it would be. What he wished the Committee to notice was the great disparity between the pay of these men and the cost to the country. The pay at 5s. a day amounted to £91 per annum, so that, allowing a substantial addition over the whole force for the higher pay of the superior officers, the amount required in pay could not be more than £110 or £120 at the outside. But the amount this country had to pay was £300 per man per annum. The reason for this difference was doubtless the immense cost of living in South Africa. According to a Memorandum placed before the

Colonial Secretary a few weeks ago by the mine owners in Johannesburg, the average wages paid to a skilled white labourer in the mines was £24 10s. 9d. per month, while the cost of living, if the man was married, amounted to £24 10s. He had no doubt that the cause of the great discrepancy between the pay of the men and the cost to the country was the fact that with the settlement of South Africa had come the time of rings and combines. Probably not more than one-third of this £1,000,000 would go in wages, the balance being required for clothing, the food of horses and men, and the necessary articles for the maintenance of the force. It was well known that great financial corporations had taken advantage of the settlement of the war to form rings in the supply of necessaries. The Committee heard some time ago of a certain cold storage company. That company, after paying a dividend of 1,000 per cent., had dissolved, but its place had been taken by an even more powerful monopoly.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN said it would be out of order to discuss the causes of the high prices of food. All the Committee had to discuss was the extra money required for the maintenance of the South African Constabulary.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the additional cost was due to the maintenance of 4,000 men beyond the 6,000 required for police purposes, until they were disbanded.

MR. WHITLEY said the right hon. Gentleman had stated that this £1,000,000 was for the pay and expenses of these men, and he submitted that he was entitled to argue the question. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted that the Vote was not for pay alone, and he submitted that he was entitled to argue why the pay was such a small item and the expenses on the other hand were such a large proportion of the Vote.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There is a note that the extra money is required for the extra 4,000 men of the constabulary. The hon. Member would be in order in discussing that.

MR. WHITLEY said his whole point was, what was the reason why these men cost the heavy sum which was indicated on the Estimate, and was it not a question as to whether so many men were required or not?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member would be perfectly in order in discussing that on the ordinary Estimates, but on this Supplementary Vote it is not in order.

MR. WHITLEY said this was something which had arisen since the original Vote was passed, and it was actually part of the £1,000,000 which they were now asked to approve.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The extra money is asked for on account of the extra men, and on that point the hon. Gentleman would be quite in order.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) pointed out that the £1,000,000 was for the extra men.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN thought there was some misapprehension upon this point. An Estimate was originally taken for 4,000 men and they were raised, and the estimated cost of that force was on an average, with horses, outfit and keep, £250 per man. Nothing had occurred since the war or in recent experience to increase the cost per man, as the hon. Member opposite seemed to suppose, since the money for the original 6,000 men was voted, but His Majesty's Government had felt that this additional 4,000 men were no longer required for police purposes, and they ought not to be charged upon the colonies but should be paid for out of the Imperial funds because they had been raised for Imperial purposes. The cost was exactly the same per man, and nothing had since happened to increase that cost.

MR. WHITLEY said that hardly seemed to him to cover the point.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow the discussion to go on after my ruling and after what the Minister in charge has said. Therefore, it will be out of order to discuss this point further.

MR. WHITLEY said that all he desired to do now was to express his surprise that on a vote for £1,000,000 the rules of the House did not allow them to discuss the matter.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It would be out of order to discuss now the procedure of this Committee.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he did not quite understand to what the additional cost was due. The original Estimate was for 10,000 men at £750,000, and he wanted to know if there was no additional cost of maintenance; if the number was the same as the War Office originally estimated, how was it that they were now asked to vote this additional sum. The sum put down now was £1,000,000, but £750,000 was printed in the Budget as asked for some months ago. He understood that the numbers had not been altered, and the cost of maintenance remained the same.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that when the organisation of the permanent police force was undertaken Lord Roberts was of opinion that 10,000 men would be required. Even at that time Lord Milner thought a smaller number would suffice, but it was decided at that time that it would be desirable to raise 10,000 men, or an additional 4,000 beyond what Lord Milner thought would be required. After the conclusion of the war the Secretary of State for War felt some hesitation about putting on his Vote any part of the payment for the South African Constabulary, which were, after all, a civil force. His Majesty's Government entered into communication with Lord Milner as to what force would be sufficient as a permanent constabulary for the new colonies .After hearing Lord Milner's views, and in accordance with his advice, the force was fixed at 6,000 men. That in the opinion of the local authorities was a sufficient force to secure the proper discharge of all the duties which fell upon the constabulary force in those parts. The 10,000 constabulary had then been raised, and they could not at once disband in South Africa 4,000 out of the 10,000 men raised before the conclusion of the war. Accordingly it was arranged with Lord Milner that he should stop all recruiting for the constabulary force and fill up no vacancies; and that, as opportunity offered and as he was able to do so without inflicting injustice upon individual troopers or upsetting the labour market and thus causing distress in South Africa, he should diminish the number of the constabulary until they reached 6,000. That was to be a gradual process and the reduction had to be spread over the whole year. His Majesty's Government now asked the Committee to vote the cost of those additional 4,000 men from Imperial funds on the ground that they were no longer required for the purposes of the constabulary force in South Africa. The reduction of the extra force was now going on and it was felt that this was an operation which could not be properly charged to the two colonies. The hon. Member opposite had asked him why the expense was so large. The reason was that this process of getting rid of the extra 4,000 men could only be done gradually and would not be complete probably until the end of the next financial year, namely, the 31st of March, 1904, so that the expenditure included in this Vote really covered something like one and a half years.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON pointed out that last June in the amended Budget the Estimate was for £750,000 and £1,000,000 was now asked for. He wished to know what was the explanation of the extra £250,000.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that £750,000 was the estimated cost from July, 1902, to March, 1903. Meanwhile the 4,000 men had been from week to week further reduced, but they would not be wholly got rid of before the 31st of March, 1904. The extra sum was for the cost of maintaining the men while they were being reduced to the number of 6,000, and it was the cost of maintaining the smaller number for the longer period.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked with respect to the 3,000 or 4,000 men who were not wanted, whether they were employed and what they were doing.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that so many as were retained in the service were still there. They were used during the war mainly as a military force. Now that the war was happily over the constabulary was being organised. It was not possible to dismiss those 4,000 men without causing terrible hardship, and without throwing on the labour market a large number of men who had no resources. The forces would be diminished as rapidly as opportunity offered.

MR. BRYCE said nobody complained of the men being properly treated, but he wanted to know what they were doing. Were the men at present drilled and organised as constabulary in these two colonies ?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN : Yes, Sir.

MR. BRYCE : But they are not wanted.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he was exceedingly unfortunate in endeavouring to make himself understood on this subject. He would try to use plain language. The permanent force was not required above 6,000. It would be reduced to 6,000 as opportunity offered, but in the meantime so many as were retained were serving as constabulary. He was by no means prepared to say that the whole of that force could be disbanded at once. He hoped they would be disbanded before the end of the next financial year.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) : What is the cost per man of those who joined the constabulary ?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: £250 per annum.

*MR. MARKHAM said he knew that was according to the Estimate, but he had reason to believe that the Estimate was not being fulfilled, and that the cost greatly exceeded that amount. His hon. friend on that side of the House had referred to the cost of living as an argument why the constabulary had cost so much. He had said it cost £24 per month for a man living in South Africa. The hon. Member begged to point out that the cost before the war for an unmarried man was £6 to £7 per month. That was the charge made by all the mines where men were clubbed together. There was considerable discontent among the constabulary in regard to the question of pay. The cost of the constabulary per man was £250 per annum, and he thought the Committee ought to have some explanation, on behalf of the Government, how that amount was made up. The men there were quite unable to live on their pay. In the speech the Colonial Secretary made in July last he stated that Lord Milner had informed him that he trusted the revenue of the Transvaal would be able to meet all the expenses of the administration of the country. He would therefore ask whether that estimate was wrong and why, in view of the fact that the Transvaal returns showed a very much increased revenue as compared with what it was before the war, the whole of this expenditure was being thrown on the Imperial exchequer ?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said everyone must sympathise with the statement that proper consideration should be given to these men. What had happened ? The Government took money for 10,000 men.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN : No.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES : Well, they raised 10,000 men, and if they did not take money for them he thought they ought to have done so. When they reduced the number from 10,000 to 6,000 he thought they would have asked for £1,000,000 less. The second remark he had to make was that this money provided for £260 per man and horse. Were they going to keep the horses also ? Otherwise the sum they asked was too large. He had no desire to do any injustice to the men or the horses, but was it necessary to keep the horses for a year ? He had another remark to make on this item which he hoped the Committee would attend to, for it was a very important one and affected a great many millions of money. There was the following note near the bottom of the page:—

> "The expenditure out of this grant-in-aid will be subject to audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General, but no surrender will be made of any balance unexpended at the close of the financial year."

If there was to be no surrender what was the use of the audit?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he would explain that. If there was to be a surrender at the end of the present financial year it was quite clear that there would be no money available to pay the men during the next financial year. There would be an audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General, and any sum not required for the purpose for which the money was voted would be ultimately returned. The Auditor General would control the expenditure of the money and see that it was spent on the purpose for which the House voted it, but that portion which was not spent on the 31st March this year would not have to be surrendered at the end of the month. The money would run over into next year for the purpose to which it was proposed to devote it.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said the right hon. Gentleman had avowed a financial misdeal of the most alarming description. The Committee were asked to vote money for the year ending 31st March which the right hon. Gentleman was not going to use in that year. That was a destruction of the whole financial system of this country. It was a circumstance which he would commend to the attention of the hon. Member for Oldham who was sitting behind him. He hoped that when the Postmaster General was examined before the Committee on accounts he might attempt to justify this system of finance. He doubted whether the Committee had the power to vote the money in face of the avowal they had just heard. This grant-in-aid of local revenues, amounting to £2,842,500, was, they were told, to be subject to audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General, but no unexpended balance was to be returned. The whole purpose of an audit was to see that the money was properly expended within the year, and that the portion of it not expended should be surrendered. If that condition did not obtain there was no purpose in the world for having any audit at all. He said that was calculated to deceive the House of Commons. If they were going to make this grant-in-aid a gift out and out they should not pretend that there was to be an audit at all. The right hon. Gentleman had told the Committee that the sum would probably be expended partially in the next year. He very much doubted whether the Comptroller and Auditor General would have any authority over that. It was not a proper proceeding to suggest that there was to be an effective audit when they were at the same time told that there was to be no surrender of the unexpended balance.

SIR ROBERT REID said the point raised by the hon. Member for King's Lynn was one of considerable importance. When the money was asked in the form of a Supplementary Estimate it was understood that it was a supplement to what had already been voted for that year. What was now proposed was practically a very novel departure.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No.

SIR ROBERT REID: Said he was sorry to hear that there were precedents. That demand of the Government for this money was based on the supposition that no part of that sum of £2,800,000 was contributed by the Transvaal or Orange River Colony. He would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he could lay before the Committee a statement of the actual receipts and outlay of the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal. When they asked to know what was the state of the accounts of those colonies and if there was an annual deficit, it might be found that instead of that being a land flowing with milk and honey it might involve a serious and heavy outlay on the part of this country. Under whose supervision was this money to be applied? Was the Colonial Office itself to keep the supervision, and would it satisfy itself, in order that it might satisfy this House, that the money would be applied to that particular purpose for which it was voted?

He hoped it would not be applied to any kindred purpose.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that the hon. and learned Member seemed to think that he had been guilty of some novel financial heresy which would lead the Committee into most dangerous paths where they would be able no longer to safe-guard the financial interests of the country. He was treading the beaten path, often trod before, and pursuing the ordinary and usual practice in regard to grants-in-aid for Colonial Services or Protectorate Services, or for Civil Services at home. The hon. Gentleman below the Gangway, and the hon. and learned Member who had just spoken, had asked him for further explanation as to whether the estimates formed of the financial condition of the Transvaal had been realised. He had no idea that such a question would be asked and accordingly had not provided himself with the figures; but he believed that these expectations had been fully and completely realised. He had no doubt that the resources of the Transvaal would be sufficient in the present financial year to meet the whole of the current expenses of the Transvaal administration, and the Government were not asking the Committee to vote this money because the resources of the Transvaal had fallen below working expenses, but because this money would not be a fair charge on the Transvaal at all. These men were raised for Imperial purposes and were used to relieve the troops and to make up the diminution in the number of soldiers that would otherwise have been required. Now that the war was over they had to consider what the permanent position was to be. Clearly what constabulary was necessary for colonial purposes the Transvaal ought to pay for; but it was not right that we should impose this burden on the Transvaal. It was the opinion of the Government that these 4,000 men were not required for colonial constabulary purposes and therefore they proposed to pay for them until they were got rid of. That operation would be spread over some time. Of course the men joined under a contract, and the contract was binding on the Government; and it was only as the men were willing to remain in the Transvaal in order to take advantage of opportunities of other service under the Government or elsewhere that they could be got rid of.

Sir ROBERT REID asked if the remaining 6,000 would be paid for by the Transvaal.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that they would, and that the sum he was asking the Committee to vote was an adjustment which he believed, on the whole, to be fair between the conflicting claims of the local administration as representing the taxpayers of the Transvaal, and the Government as representing the taxpayers of this country. The final adjustment between the two would include all sums that the Committee would be asked to vote in connection with the administration of the Transvaal.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham) said that the right hon. Gentleman told the Committee that this Vote was asked for in the process of making the reduction of the South African Constabulary from 10,000 to 6,000, and that the reduction was to be spread over a period which began before this debate took place, and which would not terminate until the end of the financial year 1904. During that period they would be paying at the rate of £250 a year per man—the total number, estimated in thousands, being admittedly not wanted for the greater part of that period. The right hon. Gentleman said that these men joined under contract and that that contract could not be broken. No one suggested that any contract should be broken; but the contract only referred to pay and allowances, and it seemed absurd to keep men under arms and under semi-military conditions for that considerable period when, probably by some arrangement for the payment of a lump sum, the amount could be considerably reduced. He would point out that the extra expenditure would amount to £150 per man during the greater part of the year and a half for between 2,500 and 3,000 men. He thought it would be admitted that the Government were dealing very generously, if not lavishly, with this question. In England, when men in the Government dockyards were dispensed with they were not treated in that fashion. It had always been held that the Government ought not to adopt any charitable view in that regard, even in dealing with public money; that they ought to deal with such money only in the public interest.

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS wished the right hon. Gentleman to tell the Committee if any attempt had been made to ascertain whether these 4,000 extra men would not accept a small sum to be discharged at once. If some of them were to remain for a year that would mean £250, and he ventured to say that there was not one who would not accept half the amount to go at once. Why was not that done? It would save the country £500,000 at least.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said it was perfectly clear from the extremely lucid statement which the right hon. Gentleman had given the Committee that this was not a grant-in-aid. It was really an Imperial service payment for Imperial services for Imperial purposes. It was only as a matter of convenience that it had been put in the form of a grant-in-aid, part of which was being expended for this financial year and part to be expended in the next financial year. But no one ever asked the House of Commons for a distinctly Imperial service in a Supplementary Estimate not for this year but for the next year. He knew that the Comptroller and Auditor General in former days would have demanded, if this had been a grant-in-aid made for the purposes of the present year, the surrender of the surplus which was not expended. He did not think that any grant-in-aid had ever been given for a service which was specifically not a service for the year in which it was granted, but for the succeeding year. If the Committee passed the Vote, Parliament would lose control over the money. As had been suggested, Parliament next year might desire to make some arrangement with those men; but that would not be in their power if they now voted all the money required for this particular purpose up to the 31st of March 1904, as they would have parted with the power over the money which they now possessed and which they ought to retain. They ought to be in a position in the ensuing year to attach such conditions to the expenditure as might be required; and he was quite sure that if the financial principles which his right hon. friend the Postmaster General had advanced were adopted, they would have filched from them a power which they ought to retain.

Sir BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.) said he was rather astonished to hear the Postmaster General state that it was impossible to surrender whatever balance might be left, because that balance, after the 31st of March, would be used to pay the constabulary for the next year. He understood, however, it was the intention of the Government to bring in a Vote on Account before the 31st of March, and any money required for the purpose could be included in that.

*Lieut.-Colonel GEORGE KEMP (Lancashire, Heywood) said his hon. friend the Member for Oldham suggested, he thought very properly, that it might have been well to have offered these men a lump sum to terminate their service instead of keeping them on for a longer period.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that he had carefully guarded himself against the suggestion that the whole of this force was unnecessary at the present time. He believed it was not possible to allow all the men to go at once, if they were willing; but even if that were possible, there were contracts that should be observed. He had already assured the Committee that the local authorities would take every opportunity to reduce the strength of the force, according to the measure of the possibilities of the case. They were, however, in a transition period.

*Lieut.-Colonel GEORGE KEMP asked if he were right in understanding that none of these men could be dispensed with at present. The question he wished to ask was whether any efforts had been made to ascertain on what terms the men would terminate their service at once. He had a similar case in mind. Last year a considerable number of yeomanry were employed, and he knew from his own personal experience that the large bulk of them, on being brought down to Capetown in September or the end of August, 1902, would have gone home and terminated their service, had they been offered a fortnight's furlough and their war gratuity. This, however, the Government refused, and was thereby put to the expense of housing and feeding them till January, 1903. An enormous and unnecessary expense was thereby cast upon the country. This was a parallel case, and he wished to know whether steps would be taken to avoid a similar waste of public money.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that as far as he understood, and his information was not very full in regard to this matter, such means as his hon. friend suggested would certainly be taken to assist the disbandment of this force. He quite appreciated the point raised by his hon. friend, and he would see that inquiries were instituted as to whether all that was possible was being done, in the manner suggested, or whether anything further could be done.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said the Vote was in aid of the local revenues of the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, and after what had been said by the right hon. Gentleman, he hoped it would be the last grant for that purpose. He should be glad to have a statement as to the total amount granted during this year under that head; and he thought that they ought to have a more formal balance-sheet than they had. The right hon. Gentleman almost admitted that the Vote was in an unsatisfactory form, but not a word had been said by the right hon. Gentleman as to mixing up the expenditure of this year with the expenditure of next year. Two hon. Gentlemen had spoken, each of whom had held the office of Secretary to the Treasury, and they both disapproved in the most emphatic way of the Government asking for money, not only for the year ending 31st of March, but also for the following year. The Constitutional practice was that the expenditure for each year should be kept within the year, and that money should not be taken for expenditure after the 31st of March in any particular year. On that ground alone the Estimate ought to be withdrawn. It had further been made clear by the hon. and gallant Gentleman that there was extravagance connected with this matter, and the hon. Member for Oldham suggested that with care £200,000 or £300,000 might have been saved, but that the Government lost the opportunity of effecting that economy. The suggestion of the hon. and gallant Gentleman was that if a conciliatory spirit were shown, and if a gratuity were offered to these men, they might be disbanded in a much shorter time than was contemplated by the Government. The Committee should remember that those 6,000 or 10,000 men—they never had the exact number—were not the only forces maintained in the South African colonies. They had there from 30,000 to 40,000 soldiers; and, therefore, the matter might be dealt with in a quicker and more satisfactory way. He thought he would be expressing the views of many hon. Gentlemen if he moved the reduction of the Vote by £100 on the two grounds he had mentioned; first because it was very unsatisfactory to take money for an ensuing year, and secondly because there had been extravagance. He begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £1,015,900 be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he thought that the Postmaster General had put himself into a more serious situation than he had any notion of. He had stated the most amazing financial heresy of which any Minister could be capable. He who had been Secretary to the Treasury suggested that an unexpended balance should not be returned. The Comptroller and Auditor General, however, distinctly laid it down that such balances should be returned. Further, they did not know whether the money would be expended for the purpose for which it was intended or whether it would be spent for some other purpose; and at the same time they had the amazing, incredible and unprecedented avowal of the right hon. Gentleman that the money was to be expended, not in the course of the current year, but in the course of next year. The Votes of this House were always framed with a view to expenditure for the current year. That was the whole foundation of the financial system, and at the end of their financial year unexpended balances were surrendered and went into the Treasury in alleviation of the National Debt. He should not have expected from the right hon. Gentleman such an avowal.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said that under this Vote, if passed in this shape, there was no possibility of the Government getting back the unexpended balance which was obtained. What were they going to do with it? Was the House of Commons going to give a blank cheque to the Government to spend money in any way they desired? He could not understand the Government proposing this enormous vote without giving the Committee an opportunity to discuss it on the revised Estimates. Only a few months ago this Vote was asked for in the shape of £700,000; now it came before the Committee in the shape of £1,000,000. That in itself showed that these Estimates were a of the vaguest description, and an opportunity ought to be given to discuss them at least once a year. Yesterday, when a small Vote was being discussed, the Secretary to the Treasury by his remarks had almost compelled the view to be taken that when there was likely to be a surplus the Treasury rather suggested to the Departments that the Supplementary Estimates should be as large as possible in order that the charge should not be paid in this year. This Department had evidently said, "Very well, take our £300,000 and make it £1,000,000." The right hon. Gentleman representing the Colonial Office had stated that grants-in-aid were of common occurrence, but he had subsequently stated more than once in the debate that this grant was not drawn to any particular colony at all; it was rather a grant to ourselves, and in our own service, and if that were so the same system of surrender ought to be adopted with regard to this Vote as to others.

Sir ROBERT MOWBRAY (Lambeth, Brixton) said that, although it had been stated that no balance would be surrendered at the end of the year, he took it for granted that when the accounts were audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General, and it was found there was an unexpended balance it would be surrendered to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He could not contemplate for a moment such a thing as the Secretary to the Treasury or the Postmaster General refusing to surrender it. He had sat for many years on the Public Accounts Committee, and they did not like these grants at all. Now the Government were going a step further. He could not understand why the Postmaster General, as representing the Colonial Secretary, had not presented an estimate up to the end of the year.

Sir J. BLUNDELL MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich) desired to have the matter made quite clear. What date did the Colonial authorities take for the expenditure of this money? These were grants-in-aid of local revenues, but was it not the fact that Cape Colony took over all liabilities such as this? With regard to horses and all accoutrements there was such an agreement, and to make a precedent in this case would be disastrous. It was a great pity the Government would not take the Vote back and properly estimate it. This was a part of the dreadful extravagance from which they had suffered during the war. To put a cool million down as a Supplementary Estimate in this way was a very serious matter, and he thought that they would be well advised if they withdrew this Vote and brought it into the ordinary Estimates when it could be fully discussed.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that, although as was stated in the footnote to the Estimate, any unexpended balance of this grant-in-aid would not be surrendered at the end of the financial year, the expenditure would be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General and any balance found by him to be unexpended when the transaction was closed would be surrendered.

SIR R. REID: When?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Possibly in the course of next year.

SIR R. REID said he was glad to hear that when the transaction was closed any unexpended balance would be surrendered, because, so far as he knew, there was no Act of Parliament by which that was required to be done, except at the end of the financial year. But even though, formally or informally, any such unexpended balance was to trickle back to the Treasury, the other matter to which reference had been made, remained. The right hon. Gentleman had said that it was common precedent in the case of grants-in-aid for the money to be granted for a coming year. Was there really any precedent for a transaction such as that now proposed? This was supposed to be a Supplementary Estimate "of the amount required in the year ending 31st March, 1903," but it extended not only past that date, but for an indefinite period beyond. He was not acquainted with the ways of the Treasury further than to know that they required to be constantly watched and controlled by the House of Commons, but if it was their practice to ask the House in a Supplementary Estimate of the amount required before the conclusion of the financial year, for money required not for the financial year at all, but for a subsequent year, and possibly two subsequent years, it was a very bad practice, contrary to the ancient usages of the House, and one of those dangerous innovations which ought to be checked at once. For his own part, he would have no hesitation in voting, not only for the Amendment, but against the whole Estimate, on the ground that it was an unconstitutional demand, and a violation of the fundamental principle on which Parliament voted money.

SIR JOHN GORST wished the Committee to realise the point at issue. The Government was under an obligation in respect of 4,000 of these constabulary. The men were raised when they were not wanted for civil purposes, and now that the war was over the Government was under an obligation to pay them until they could be discharged. The natural way of doing that would be to put down an estimate of the cost of paying or compounding with these men up to 31st March of the present year, and then in the Estimates of next year to put down a sum for the year ending 31st March, 1904. That would have been the proper constitutional mode of procedure, but what were the Government asking? Not for a sum of money with which they would discharge Imperial obligations, but for £1,000,000 to hand over to the Government of the Transvaal, over which, once the money was handed out, neither the House nor the Government would have any control whatever. It was true that the right hon. Gentleman had said that at the close of the transaction, if any of the money remained unexpended—a most improbable contingency—by the free choice of the Transvaal Government the balance would be returned to the exchequer. But Imperial obligations ought to be discharged through our own Government, who were responsible to, and controlled by, that House. He should certainly vote against the proposal to hand £1,000,000 to people over whom we had no control whatever, unless the Government agreed to withdraw the present Supplementary Estimate, and bring up one asking to be voted to them, and not to the Transvaal Government, the sum required for the current year, putting on next year's Estimates the amount required to discharge their obligations in that year.

MR. LOUGH in order that the Committee might vote on the whole Question, asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 215; Noes, 148. (Division List No 14.)

AYES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Manr*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (*Middx.*)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brown, Sir Alx. H. (*Shropsh.*)
Bull, William James
Campbell, Rt Hn J A (*Glasg.*)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, H. Shepherd (*Bolton*)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R. (*Tr. Haml'ts*
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Jos. C.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest

Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (*St. Albans*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gordon, Maj Evans-(*Tr. Hmlts*
Gore, HnG. R. C. Ormsby-(*Salop*
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Gray, Ernest (*West Ham*)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hamilton, Marq. of (*Londondy*
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robt. Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashfd*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (*Sheff., B'tside*)
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Johnstone, Heywood
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawson, John Grant
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockie, John
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (*Evesham*
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, C. (*Liverpool*)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, J. (*Stirlingshire*)
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, R. Jasper (*Shropshire*)
Morgan, D. J (*Walthamstow*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer

Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (*Stalybridge*
Ritchie, Rt. Hon Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel *Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. L. Walter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Samuel, H. S. (*Limehouse*)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Saunderson, Rt. Hn Col. Edw. J.
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Seely, C. Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, H C. (*North'mb. Tynsid*
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks*
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (*Ormskirk*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Rt. Hn J. G. (*Oxf'd Univ*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E H (*Sheffield*
Walrond, Rt. Hn Sir William H
Welby, Lt.-Col. A C E. (*Taunton*
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (*Notts*)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York, E. R.*)
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson, J. W. (*Worcestersh. N.*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn E. R. (*Bath*)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Ambrose, Robert
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Beckett, Ernest William
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bowles, T. G. (*King's Lynn*)
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*)
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Davies, M. Vaughan- (*Cardign*
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*
Ffrench, Peter
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Grey, Rt. Hn. Sir E. (*Berwick*
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (*Bristl, E*
Holland, Sir William Henry
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, David B. (*Swansea*)
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Joyce, Michael
Kemp, Lieut.-Col. George
Lambert, George
Law, H. Alex. (*Donegal, W.*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
M'Govern, T.
Malcolm, Ian
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Markham, Arthur Basil
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (*Cork*)
O'Brien, Kendal (*Tipperary Mid*
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Connor, James (*Wicklow W*
O'Donnell, T. (*Kerry, W*)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (*Mayo, N.*)
O'Kelly, James (*Roscommon, N*)
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Charles M. (*Durham*
Partington, Oswald
Peel, Hn Wm. Robert Wellesley
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (*Waterford*)
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*)
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Smith, Samuel (*Flint*)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (*Carmarthen E*)
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glamorgan, E*)
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Vincent, Sir Edgar (*Exeter*)
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*)
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*)
White, George (*Norfolk*)
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, George (*York, W.R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, F. W. (*Norfolk Mid*)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Lough and Mr. Churchill.

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATE, 1902-3.

£100 (Supplementary) Pay, etc., of the Army.)

SIR J. BLUNDELL MAPLE said this was another most extraordinary Vote which they were asked to give. He wished to protest against Votes being taken in this way, for in regard to this Vote they had had no time, no particulars, and they were unaware altogether that the Vote was coming on. There were items in this Vote which required a good deal of consideration and upon which he thought it would be right and proper that the Committee should have some information Seeing this morning that the Vote was put down, he wrote a letter to the Minister in charge, which he thought would explain a great deal of what was felt upon this question. In that letter he asked certain questions respecting the enormous quantity of horses which were bought for South Africa, and which had been returned at great expense to England, hundreds of them going to different centres, like Colchester, before being sold. In that letter he asked the Minister in charge of this Vote to inform himself as to the details of the sale of hundreds of these horses which were returned, the cost of bringing them home and keeping them for many weeks before being disposed of, the cost of conveyance to the different centres where they were sold, the auctioneer's expenses, and whether the sum set down included also the sale of horses, saddlery etc., during the last financial year. The Committee would be surprised to hear that a large number of the horses bought by the Remount Department were not delivered in South Africa, where horses were very badly wanted, but many of them were at once sent to England at a very large extra cost. They were then taken to Colchester and other large centres in hundreds and kept there for a long time. He had seen photographs of some of those horses, and all he could say about them was that he never saw such shocking rubbish in his life. After being there some weeks these horses were sent to different parts of the country, so many per week, and sold, and most of them fetched less than £10 apiece. Therefore, horses which cost on an average £25 and £30 each to land in South Africa, and for which this country had to pay for bringing back again to England, were taken to Colchester and sold for a paltry sum of £10 apiece or less. That was a question which he thought should be thoroughly gone into. It was one of those matters which belonged to the Remount Department. He believed they were promised that that Department should be reorganised and gone into. But nevertheless, things were pretty much now as they were before. They had had certain Committees dealing with these matters, but from what he had gathered, there had been no change whatsoever. He referred particularly to this question, because if they passed this Vote for £100 they could not discuss the matter again. It seemed to him to be an extraordinary thing for the Government to ask for just £100. In the Estimate there were items amounting to £5,500,000 and yet they only put down a Vote for £100, and when this Vote was agreed to, the whole question would have been voted upon. At the foot of the Estimate there was a note as follows—

> "This further amount is required mainly to provide for the terminal charges in connection with the late war in South Africa. The additional receipts are due to sales of surplus animals, supplies, vehicles, stores, etc., in South Africa on the conclusion of the war."

There were sales in South Africa, but what about the horses that were brought over? Did they belong to the different regiments to which they had been sent? He contended that these horses ought never to have been brought back to England. They ought to have been sold in South Africa, where the people were badly in want of horses. They would have brought a better market there. They might be rubbish, but still they would be a great deal more valuable in South Africa than here. By bringing them over here the Government were putting the country to further expense. He did not think the Committee should pass this Supplementary Estimate without further information as to the course which had been pursued in this matter. In reply to a letter he wrote to the Financial Secretary to the War Office he received the following telegram to-day—

> "Your letter received. Only just learned myself that that Vote would be taken to-day. Will endeavour give particular answer your questions."

That telegram was sent at a quarter to twelve o'clock, so that the noble Lord was unaware till then that this Vote was to be taken to-day. He supposed that the whole matter for the present year would be disposed of now, and that the Committee would not be able to deal with it again. He hoped they would hear something from the Secretary of State for War which would enable them to better understand the subject to which he had called attention.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton) said he did not know why the private telegram he sent to the hon. Baronet should have been brought into the debate. He was glad to say that on this question of horses he could himself take the sole and the fullest responsibility for what had been done. When the war closed the purchase of horses was proceeding. A large number were on board ships, and there were contracts that could not be broken. The question arose whether the horses should be sent to South Africa or to England for sale. The general officer commanding in South Africa was consulted, and his advice was not to sell in South Africa, and

1,246 were brought home from South Africa and 2,451 from Canada. Some of the horses brought home were of the kind required for the artillery units, and what to do with the remainder was the subject of consideration. They consulted the general officer commanding in South Africa as to whether there would be a sale for the horses out there, and his answer was that there would not be a market. The hon. Baronet had talked of giving the horses away, and stated that the horses were wanted there. But there was the question to be considered whether it was wise to give away too many horses in South Africa. For that reason they thought it right only to sell horses in South Africa with the consent of Lord Milner. That, he thought, was perfectly right. Therefore came the question: What were they to do with these horses when they were brought home to this country? Some of of these horses were of a kind which the War Office knew would have to be bought for the artillery units. It was therefore cheaper to bring back in the transports which were coming home the horses which would be required for the artillery units. As to the remainder of the horses, they consulted as to what ought to be done. The animals came in the autumn, and all stables being full they were put out to grass by arrangements made through the general officers commanding in various districts. Then as winter approached further arrangements had to be made. The horses could not be kept out at grass, and the question arose whether they should be sold, and putting them all on the market at once meant that a good price could not be secured, or whether sheds should be put up and the sales spread over a longer period. The alternative was adopted of cutting losses. The best of the horses were exchanged for those that were inferior among the mounted troops, and others were sold to the Yeomanry. They were, therefore, the worst of the horses that were sold at an average of rather over £14 each. If the horses had been kept during the winter a better bargain would not have been made, and according to a telegram received from South Africa, large sales had been effected there at £12 each, and the horse market being apparently satisfied, the average price was not likely to increase at all proportionately to the quality of the horses they had to offer. It would therefore be seen that by selling in England they got £2 per horse more than if they had been sold in South Africa.

*SIR ARTHUR HAYTER (Walsall) said he agreed with the hon. Baronet the Member for Dulwich as to the extraordinary character of this Supplementary Estimate. The Committee would, at any rate, be of opinion that the Estimate presented was one of the most striking illustrations of the difficulty of proceeding by Estimate when they had to deal with war. He drew attention to an item of £2,600,000 for gratuities to troops for active service. There had been already paid on this account in 1901–2 £2,340,000, and last year the Committee was only asked for £350,000. He wished to know what was the meaning of this great discrepancy. He could not understand how the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War should have taken such a ridiculously small sum last year as £350,000, and then come down at the end of the financial year to ask for £2,600,000. Then he desired to ask a question as to the China Expeditionary Force, a sum for which was taken at £200,000. He did not suppose that the Committee remembered that in 1900 a sum of £3,500,000 was taken for the cost of that expedition, and in 1901 £630,000; but for the present year only £50,000 was asked for. Why was there £200,000 additional required now in a Supplementary Estimate? He could understand that when these wars were financed from India, where there was a different audit from here, there should be a delay in presenting the accounts, but he could not see why £200,000 was demanded for the cost of the Chinese War so long after it was over. There was a note on the Estimate in regard to a large sale of vehicles in South Africa. This question had come before the Public Accounts Committee, which was informed by officers of the Department that every waggon had been numbered and would be accounted for, and that at the close of the war the Government would not be damaged by the sale of them. He would like to know whether that sale had been satisfactory, and that the statements of the officers had been borne out in fact.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that the form of this Vote was extremely inconvenient and somewhat misleading. The Committee was asked to vote only £100, but in reality it was a vote for £5,500,100. He presumed that this would be called an Excess Vote, but while the Committee was voting that £5,500,000, no Ways and Means would be required for raising the money as usual, because it was provided for in consequence of a mistake on the other side. The Government had under-estimated expenditure by that amount, but they had also under-estimated the appropriation-in aid to an equal amount. As a matter of fact this Vote was to authorise the application of £5,500,000 as the proceeds of a rummage sale of old horses in South Africa, and the addition of that sum to their original estimates. Again he must complain of the form of this Vote, and the way in which information was withheld. It was invariably the case when a Supplementary Estimate was made to show the amount of the original Estimate, and he could only suppose that that had not been done in this case because of the amazing results which would have flashed immediately on the attention of the Committee. He had had therefore to take his way to the Vote Office to get the original War Office Estimates, so that he might supply to the Committee what his right hon. friend ought to have submitted himself.

Take item 8; they were asked to vote £2,600,000 for gratuities; that was to say, this was a Supplementary Estimate to the sum originally voted for that item. It might naturally be supposed that the Supplementary Estimate would be very much less than the original. It was nothing of the sort; it was enormously greater; it was about eight times greater. The original sum asked for in 1902–3, with all the wisdom of the War Office, for gratuities to troops on active service, was put down at £350,000, and the Committee were now asked to add to that £2,600,000. He maintained that that was a most amazing instance of Supplementary Estimates. There was an almost equally remarkable instance under the item A. A. The whole of the original sum asked for for the China Expeditionary Force was £50,000, while the Supplementary Estimate was £200,000, so that the supplement was four times as large as the original. That betokened a habit on the part of the Departments of making the Estimates what they pleased before the House of Commons, and then coming again to the House to ask for three, four, five, and even eight times as much as the original Estimate, as a Supplementary Estimate. That, he contended, was an abuse of the term "Supplementary Estimate." The Supplementary Estimate was only justifiable at all when some contingency had arisen which could not have been foreseen when the original Estimate was framed. That was not true of any item on the paper laid before the Committee. It was disgraceful to any Government to be so much out in an Estimate of £60,000,000 as by £5,500,000. He ventured to suggest that if it had not been for the fact that the right hon. Gentleman had got £5,500,000 for the horses—a very good price, considering that they were the worst horses in the habitable world—forage, and stores, the Estimate would have been out by £5,500,000. This sum of £5,500,000 should have been allowed to go to its proper destination, viz., the extinction of debt. As the Committee knew, the Army and Navy Departments were allowed to divert sums from one Vote to another, but that was not the case in other Departments without Treasury sanction. He supposed that the right hon. Gentleman did not require to go to the Treasury for authority to make this diversion, and therefore he held that this Excess Vote was very deceiving. The original sum was not on the Paper, so that the House might see what was the proportion between the original Estimate and the Supplementary Estimate, and that they were really voting their own horses to remedy a tremendous mistake.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) said that he also had a complaint to make. A part of the sum asked for was for the China expedition, which was over a long time ago, and another part was for an expedition not yet completed, and about the military details of which they had no information. Under the ruling of the Deputy Chairman, the Committee could not discuss what led to the latter expedition, he meant the Somaliland expedition. The Estimate put down for that expedition was no less than £50,000, the details of which had never been explained or put before the House.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said he would call attention to the fact that this Somaliland Vote was an entirely new item. It was not on the original Estimate, and, therefore, was one of the Estimates which involved a question of policy. He submitted that the hon. Gentleman would be directly in order in discussing the policy which led up to the expedition.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he would ask the Deputy-Chairman whether he would be in order in discussing the policy of the Somaliland expedition.

*The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said that it depended upon the Minister in charge of the Estimate stating whether the Somaliland Expedition was a new item or not.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he would therefore go on. Unless contradicted by the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the War Office, he maintained that this was a new Vote, and that the Committee were entirely in order in discussing the Somaliland expedition. It raised a very considerable point, to which he hoped the Committee would give attention. This was not the first Somaliland expedition. They had had one under Colonel Turnum which came to grief. That officer's Somaliland levies were scattered like chaff, and he had to withdraw. The consequence of that retreat was that we were now engaged in an expensive expedition which might assume larger proportions than the public anticipated. Troops had been hastily gathered together from India, from Natal, from Uganda, and from the King's African Regiment. They ought to have some explanation from the Minister as to what was the intention of the War Office. They ought to know whether the Government were going to repeat the policy of making an advance into the interior, or whether they intended to occupy a line of entrenched posts touching on the one hand the Italian frontier, and on the other hand a sterile and waterless tract of country. He thought the Committee ought to get some outline of what the right hon. Gentleman's advisers intended to do.

Mr. BRODRICK: The hon. Member who has just sat down has asked what is the intention of the Government with regard to Somaliland. I think that before we separated in December last my noble friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated the position. As was stated by the First Lord of the Treasury, there is no intention whatever of undertaking operations on a large scale in Somaliland. On the contrary, it is necessary to make this advance in order to punish the Mullah and to reassert our power, because it is absolutely necessary for us to protect the tribes who are under our protection. Beyond that point, and also checking any advance of the Mullah into our own territory, there has never been the slightest intention of going. Under the circumstances, it was quite impossible for us to leave the matter alone without a very considerable loss in the position which we have taken up with regard to the tribes After most careful consideration the expedition was framed on the smallest scale which was in any way commensurate with the circumstances of the case, and we have provided all that was required. The Government have every reason to believe that the advance will be covered by this Vote, and will be sufficiently provided for by the troops which are now either at or *en route* to Obbia. We do not anticipate an enormous expenditure on this expedition, nor do we intend to establish a very long line of posts over a desert country. It will not be expected that I should say what course the officer on the spot intends to pursue, but I may say that I do not think there are any hon. Members in the House more anxious than those who sit on the Ministerial Bench to keep this expedition within the narrowest possible limits.

This sum of money has appeared for the first time in the War Office Vote, but it was discussed on the Foreign Office Vote. My hon. friend has made one of his usual vehement attacks on officialdom for the manner in which this Vote has been presented to the House. When an Excess Vote is taken it is always necessary to know the circumstances connected with the original Estimate. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer explained to the House last March that he was not taking sums for the conclusion of the war, because we did not know under what circumstances the war might conclude, or what sums would be required or what troops could be withdrawn. What has taken place has been the obvious and proper course. The gratuities and the withdrawal of troops have caused a large expenditure. On the other hand we have got rid of the whole of the supplies in South Africa to the best advantage. A bargain was struck with the civil government, and the War Office did not come badly out of that transaction. As regards the remaining horses and other transport we sold to the civil government all that they could possibly take for distribution among those who were re-settling in the country. As my noble friend explained, we took a lower price for the residue of the animals which, of course, were not the best. A certain number of them were brought to this country and after the best had been taken out the remainder were sold. That is really the explanation of this Vote. War conducted on such a large scale must cause a large excess, and I do not think the sum of £5,000,000 is exceptional in an Estimate which has already grown, I think, to £80,000,000 or £90,000,000 during the course of last year. I do not think any of the remarks which apply to the Army Estimates are applicable to this Vote.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said that something had appeared with regard to the Somaliland expedition in the Foreign Office Vote, but now the whole of that expenditure had been handed over to the War Office and it was now included in this extra Vote. Therefore, as far as the War Office was concerned this was an absolutely new Vote. He did not think the criticism passed by foreign nations on the Somaliland expedition had been at all flattering to this country. It was an absurd system to have the Army kept at one time by the Foreign Office, and at another time by the War Office. The War Office had now taken over this Somaliland expedition from the Foreign Office, and they hardly knew which office would pay for the troops or which they belonged to. The system was an absurd and ridiculous one, and it made the accounts so complicated that any juggling with them which was necessary could easily be done in their transference.

Lord CRANBORNE dissented.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER said he did not accuse the noble Lord of juggling. [An Hon. Member: You said so.] No, what he stated was that the system enabled juggling to be done. He should very much like to know what proportion of this extra expenditure was supposed to go to Somaliland. The greater part of this extra Vote was no doubt due to the winding up of the war in South Africa. He would like to know what part of this Vote belonged to a totally different question. [An Hon. Member: The details are all there.] If they were there he could not find out from them what part of this extra expenditure was going to this new expedition. He hoped this would be an object lesson for the Foreign Office not to take up again the administration of arms and troops in foreign countries.

Mr. SEELY (Lincoln) said he hoped the colonial contingents had received their pay and gratuities. The colonial troops had been of great value, and it was important that they should have a good opinion of us. Our own officials had not the best reputation for settling up their accounts promptly. *Bis dat qui cito dat* was an admirable maxim, and it was of the greatest value to the Empire that none of their colonial fellow-subjects should have a grievance in regard to their pay.

*Sir JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington): The noble Lord had told the Committee that 40,000 horses had been sold at £12 a-piece in South Africa and 3,000 at £14 a-piece in England. But the total amount realised is put down as £3,600,000. Taking the whole 43,000 horses at the highest price, viz., £14, I make it that there were over 240,000 horses sold. But the noble Lord has only accounted for 43,000. Where are the other 200,000?

*LORD STANLEY: There are other animals besides horses. There are oxen and mules.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): There was one other question. He understood that when peace was concluded there were 2,400 horses in Canada waiting to be sent to the front, and that they were brought over to this country; that the best were then taken for the Artillery, and the rest were sold for what they would fetch. What he desired to know was why these screws were brought over to this country at all.

LORD STANLEY said they were not screws at all. They were the surplus over and above what the War Office could possibly use. With regard to the claims for gratuities, it was no doubt convenient to settle those as soon as possible. Of course, one method would be to pay any claim that was made, but that would be rather expensive. The War Office now had a sufficiently large staff to deal with the claims for gratuities in the most expeditious way possible, and of the colonial claims the great majority had been paid.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER asked how much of Item C also went into Item B B as part of the Somaliland expedition. It was evident that the whole of Item C was not spent in England.

LORD STANLEY explained that that money was for furlough gratuities given to the men when they landed. Men who went into the Reserve were allowed a certain amount of leave on full pay.

SIR J. BLUNDELL MAPLE could not understand why these Canadian horses were brought over to this country. He should have thought they might have been sold on the spot at a sacrifice of £2 or £3 a head, instead of being brought over here at an aggregate cost of probably £20,000 at least. He thought the money spent in bringing them here had been thrown away.

LORD STANLEY said the hon. Baronet left out of account the most important fact that the ships were already hired and had to be paid for, and as there was no market for these horses in Canada and they had the ships, the horses were brought over here.

SIR J. BLUNDELL MAPLE said of course if the ships could not be utilised in any other way that was to a certain extent a justification, but he should have thought these ships might have been utilised for the China expedition.

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER asked whether this was the final amount that would be taken for China.

MR. BRODRICK: No, Sir. I could not say that, because there are troops in excess, and we shall have to take money for them on the General Vote.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE asked for some information with regard to Somaliland. As he understood, the amount asked for in this Vote on that account was £75,000. It was impossible to bring two regiments from Uganda and three from Bombay; to purchase the camels necessary to carry water for the troops in this waterless district; and to organise native levies and the special service that had been organised on an expenditure of £75,000. He submitted that the Estimates brought before the Committee were Estimates calculated to deceive the Committee. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman's military policy would not be a repetition of the blunder committed under the auspices of the Foreign Office two years ago. The noble Lord at that time was advised that if he retreated after he had checked the Mullah, there would be a recurrence of the state of unrest and insurrection, and that had been proved to be true. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman now would not pursue a line of conduct which had proved so fatal when followed by the Foreign Office, because if he did the only result would be to pile up the Estimates of future years with such items as the Committee were now asked to vote.

MR. BRODRICK thought he might be excused from discussing any question of policy. The hon. Member was quite right in assuming that the sum put down in the Vote for the Somaliland expedition did not represent the sum which had been or would be spent. The total sum would probably amount to £250,000 by 31st March next.

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

SUPPLY [2ND MARCH, AFTERNOON SITTING].

Resolutions reported—

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1902–3

CLASS I.

1. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £7,500, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for Expenditure in respect of Royal Palaces and Marlborough House."

CLASS III.

2. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £20,300, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Expenses of the Prisons in England and Wales."

CLASS VII.

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £70,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, to repay to the India Office the Expenses of the Entertainment in this Country of Indian Representative Visitors at the Coronation of His Majesty."

CLASS II.

4. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Salaries and Expenses of certain services transferred from the Mercantile Marine Fund, and other services connected with the Mercantile Marine."

CLASS V.

5. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £10,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the expenses in connection with His Majesty's Embassies, Missions, and of Consular Establishments abroad, and other Expenditure chargeable on the Consular Vote."

Resolutions agreed to.

SUPPLY [2ND MARCH, EVENING SITTING].

Resolutions reported.

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1902–3.

CLASS V.

1. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £69,600, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Grant in aid of the British Protectorate in East Africa."

CLASS II.

2. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £620, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Salaries and Expenses of the General Valuation and Boundary Survey of Ireland."

CLASS IV.

3. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £292,807, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Board of Education."

4. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £28,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during

the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Expenses of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland."

Resolutions agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till To-morrow.

And, there being no further Business set down for the Afternoon Sitting, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair until this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

MINISTRY OF COMMERCE.

*MR HOULT (Cheshire, Wirral) said the Resolution he proposed to move would, no doubt, in some quarters be considered antagonistic to the Board of Trade. So far as he was concerned he said unhesitatingly that the President of the Board of Trade had always shown a great regard for trade interests, and this motion was not intended in any way to be antagonistic; but anyone who knew the constitution of the Board of Trade knew that its constitution was hopelessly obsolete. As a great administrative Department of the State, it administered the Acts passed from time to time regulating shipping, railways, mines, factories, and a multitude of other things, and it carried out those duties with as little friction, and with as great regard to the interests involved, as it was possible for the officials to do. Speaking as a shipowner of thirty-five years experience he had pleasure in stating that never in the whole of that period had the relations existing between the Board of Trade and that great industry been so cordial as they were now. But the Board of Trade was an administrative Board, and it was impossible for it as at present constituted to carry out the duties it was now expected to undertake with regard to trade and commerce. There was a very widespread feeling in the country that the interests of trade and commerce should be safeguarded and promoted in a manner which, so far, had not received the attention of the Government, and that the time had arrived when some new Department should be created, with a Minister at its head of high Cabinet rank.

As regarded the internal trade of the country, there were frequent complaints of high railway rates; that the canals were not made use of in the interests of trade in the way they ought to be; and that the Light Railways Acts had not been productive of the advantage to agriculture which was expected. All these matters were of the highest importance, and it seemed to him that something ought to be done to bring about a condition of things more favourable to the trade and commercial interests of the country. Whether the appointment of a Minister of Commerce would have that effect he did not know, but it was generally admitted that a great deal might be done in that direction. With regard to foreign trade, that was in the hands of three Departments. One was the Foreign Office—and the House would remember they had already had a debate upon a Treaty made between Russia and Persia. It was held by those who ought to know that that Treaty was likely to be extremely detrimental to British trade. But with a proper organisation that Treaty might have been heard of in its initial stages, and with a Minister of Commerce it was possible that such a Treaty, detrimental to our interests as this was, might have been guarded against. Another part of our foreign trade was controlled by the India Office, which might be expected to derive great assistance from a Minister of Commerce. Then there was the trade controlled by the Colonial Office. Foreign governments had their trade agents throughout the British Colonies, and those agents advised their Governments in all matters pertaining to the particular industries carried on in those countries. We had no such organisation, and our traders had to get information as to the wants of our colonies as best they could. Every other trading nation had Ministers of Commerce. The United States of America, it was true, until recently had no such Minister, but when the President in his message to Congress on December 3rd suggested that such a Minister should be appointed, so important was the matter considered that on the 13th of February following it was announced that a Minister of Commerce had been appointed. The annual meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, which represented the commercial interests of this country, was now being held in London, and he saw from the agenda that resolutions had been passed by the Chambers of Commerce of London, Liverpool, Halifax, Nottingham, Cardiff, Derby, Newcastle, Gateshead, and other places, to the effect that the overwhelming importance of the trade, commerce and shipping of the Empire demanded that the Minister in charge of the Department of the Government especially identified with these matters should be placed on the footing of a Secretary of State, in order to attract statesmen of the highest qualifications and of great experience in such matters. The Chambers of Commerce throughout the country were unanimously in favour of the appointment of such a Minister.

He called the attention of the House to recent paragraph in *The Times* dealing with the Uganda Railway. It was there pointed out that German and Italian traders were at work, but no mention was made of British traders, though England was opening up the country at great expense. What was the explanation of this? It was, he suggested, because trade agencies had informed their Governments in Europe that trade was to be done in that region, but we had no trade agents and it was possible for that reason that the British were not mentioned in the paragraph. He hoped the Government would see their way to grant what was a universal demand from the whole of the trading community of the country, and order the inquiry asked for in the Resolution with the object of making arrangements for the appointment of a Minister of Commerce. British traders did not want any exceptional privileges; they did not want bolstering up. They were made of the same material as that which enabled their forefathers to carry trade all over the world. If it had fair and equal treatment, he was perfectly satisfied that the commerce of the country would in the future occupy, if not the premier position, certainly a position of which none of them need be ashamed. It had been said that the people of this country were apathetic; but there was no apathy on the part of the traders of this country, and no apathy on the part of the great middle class, which was the backbone of the country. If there was apathy, it was apathy on the part of the Government. He would not apply that word to the present Government, but to past Governments. The present Government had a very great regard for the trading and commercial interests of the country; and he was satisfied that they would be ready to do what was wise and just in the interests of trade and commerce.

*Mr. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil) said he was sure the President of the Board of Trade would need no assurance from him that, in seconding the Motion, he was not acting in a Party spirit, or with any hostility whatever to the Department over which, in his humble judgment, the right hon. Gentleman presided with singular ability. After an experience of fifteen years as a supplicant at the doors of various Departments, he had no hesitation in saying that, with the possible exception of the Local Government Board, one received more intelligent consideration from the Board of Trade than from any other Department. As for the right hon. Gentleman himself, if he might say so without presumption, he thought the duties of the Board of Trade were congenial to him; and he brought to them very great industry and high intellectual qualifications. He said that in order to show his sincerity, and to show that in seconding the Motion he was not acting in hostility to the Board of Trade or to its President. The mover of the Motion rather emphasised that part of the Resolution which asked for the appointment of a Minister of Commerce. He would rather emphasise the latter part of the Resolution, which asked for an inquiry into the various Government Departments, because he fully recognised that before there could be any change there should be a full inquiry into all the Departments. They could not treat the Board of Trade and the Local Government Board in isolation and apart from other Departments. He wished to point out that they made no demand for a new Department. What they suggested was that a Ministry of Industry and Commerce should be substituted for the present Board of Trade. They did not ask for any additional member of the Cabinet, and they did not suggest or attempt to dictate to the

Prime Minister what offices should be directly represented in the Cabinet. As a matter of fact, he thought that for thirty years the President of the Board of Trade had been invariably a member of the Cabinet, which in itself was a recognition —although an imperfect recognition—of the principle for which they were contending.

As a commercial man, and as the representative of one of the largest industrial divisions in the country, and as a Member who had been returned almost entirely by the labour vote, he desired that the Department which had charge of the industry and commerce of the country should be represented by a Minister with the *status* of a principal Secretary of State; and he contended that on grounds of sentiment, which, he admitted, largely entered into the matter, as well as of efficiency, and economy in the truest sense of the word, the President of the Board of Trade should be raised to the position of a principal Secretary of State. It was a very remarkable fact that nearly every foreign Government had a Minister of Commerce, and that this country, which really owed everything to its commercial pre-eminence, should not have a Minister of Commerce. He should like to sketch briefly the history of the Board of Trade. The first reference to a Committee of Commerce was in 1655, when Cromwell appointed his son Richard, with many lords of his Council, judges and gentlemen, and about twenty merchants of London, York, Newcastle, Yarmouth, Dover and other places, to meet and consider by what means the traffic and navigation of the Republic might be best promoted and regulated, and to report on the subject. That was in the nature of the inquiry which they were asking for to-day. In 1660 Charles II. appointed by patent a Council of Trade, and about a month afterwards he appointed a Council of Foreign Plantations. In 1672 the previous patents were revoked and the two Councils were amalgamated as the Council for Trade and Foreign Plantations. This Council continued until 1782 when it was finally suppressed or abolished, but things did not appear to have gone on very well during the period of suppression, because a few years afterwards, in 1786, by Order in Council the Board of Trade was formed as at present constituted. It was appointed with the full designation of "Lords of the Committee of Privy Council appointed by His Majesty for the consideration of matters relating to Trade and Foreign Plantations." Before that it had been merely a Council of Trade for consultative purposes, and it consisted of a number of members of the Government who were, he believed, paid for this specific purpose. He found from a work dealing with this subject that a writer in 1746 said—

> "No distinct functions appear to have been assigned either by statute or Order in Council to the President or Vice-President; but in point of fact they are the only working members of the Board of Trade, and its business is performed by them without the interference of any of the numerous official personages who are upon the Committee of Privy Council, except only in respect of Colonial Acts referred to the Committee of Privy Council, as to which the Secretary of State for the Colonies gives his opinion in writing, as a member of the Committee, upon them, and that opinion is at once adopted as the opinion of the Committee, in all Acts which, although relating to the Colonies, do not relate to trade."

That showed that even at that time it was a one-man board as it was to-day. He had no rooted objection to one-man boards. He had himself had some experience on the boards of public companies, and he always found the most efficient boards were those on which there was one active man and where the other directors merely registered his decisions. But still, that showed that the constitution of the Board of Trade had become obsolete, and in itself, without going further, quite proved the first part of the Resolution.

In order to show the House the degree and importance of the work that the Board of Trade did, he would read a list of the establishment which was formed in 1786 to carry out the work at that time. It consisted of: Two clerks of this Council attending by rotation; a clerk specially appointed for this particular service of this Committee; a law clerk; a chief and six other clerks and an extra clerk; three managers; an office-keeper; a necessary woman; and a door-keeper. But the consequence of the work which the board had to do had so much increased by 1826 that the Chancellor of the

Exchequer of the day (Fredrick Robinson) moved—

> "That His Majesty be enabled to grant a salary of £5,000 a year to the President of the Board of Trade."

The right hon. Gentleman told him yesterday that that Resolution had not been given effect to in the Act passed a few weeks later, because the majority was so small. It was only a majority of 11. He did not think that *Hansard* quite bore out the view expressed by the right hon. Gentleman. The President of the Board of Trade received a salary of £2,000, and he then held the sinecure office of treasurer to the Navy, to which was attached a salary of £3,000. The real objection on the part of those who were opposed to the raising of the salary of the President of the Board of Trade was because it was still intended to retain this sinecure office of Treasurer to the Navy, an office once held by the Speaker of the House of Commons. The work of the Board at that time had so increased that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in moving the Resolution, said—

> "He thought that a fit remuneration for the President would be £5,000 a year. The House would recollect that it was an office which in these times especially called for more labour, both of body and mind than any other now in existence."

In 1832 the Statistical Department was added to the Board of Trade, and it had been found most useful to those business men who had the intelligence to make use of it. In 1840, the Railway Department was added In 1854, Messrs. Trevelyan and Stafford Northcote inquired into the conditions of the permanent and civil service with regard to the Board of Trade and made a Report, in which they said—

> "There is probably no Department of the Government to whose functions so many and such important additions have recently been made as the Board of Trade. While, however, these additions have been of such a nature as almost entirely to change the character of the Department, its constitution has not as yet been revised with a view to the efficient discharge of its new duties. Originally designed for consultative purposes, it was organised in a very different manner from the executive offices, and the arrangements made for the transaction of its business have not been run or are suitable to the management of administrative details. . . . The public in the meantime has to bear a heavy charge for the establishment and maintenance of separate Departments which might be united in such a manner as to produce both greater economy and greater efficiency."

The hon. Member, in moving the Resolution now before the House, had told them what the opinion of the Chambers of Commerce was to-day. He did not know whether the hon. Member was present that day during the discussion in what the Chancellor of the Exchequer once described as the Parliament of Commerce. It passed a Resolution, without a dissentient voice, praying the House of Commons to pass this Resolution in the form in which it stood on the Paper. The Chambers of Commerce had been agitating for years, and as far back as 1871 a deputation consisting of Members of this House, and representing the principal Chambers of Commerce of the country, waited upon Mr. Gladstone when he was Prime Minister. On 8th July 1879, no doubt largely at the instance of Chambers of Commerce, Mr. Sampson Lloyd moved—

> "That it is desirable that those functions of the Executive Government which especially relate to commerce and agriculture should be administered by a distinct Department under the direction of a Principal Secretary of State, who shall be a Member of the Cabinet."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day opposed, but the motion was nevertheless carried by 76 to 56, a majority of 20. On May 13th, 1881, with the assent of Mr. Gladstone, who was then Prime Minister, on going into Committee of Supply, Sir Massey Lopes carried without a division the following Motion—

> "That it is desirable that the function of the Executive Government, which especially relates to agriculture and commerce should, as far as possible, be administered by a distinct Department, to be presided over by a responsible Minister of the Crown."

But no effect whatever had been given to these Resolutions beyond the appointment of a Minister of Agriculture. The status of the Board of Trade had been in no way improved or increased.

The last time the matter came before the House was when Sir Stafford Northcote moved a Resolution similar in effect to the one proposed to-night. As he thought it had a bearing on the subject, he would read the opinion expressed then by the present

Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman agreed to a certain extent—

> "That possibly a survey of the whole multifarious work of the administrative Departments and a re-distribution of that work would be advisable. . . . I think my friend is not wrong in urging that if we had a blank sheet to deal with, and if we were not troubled by the history of the various Government Departments, and if we had to arrange the salaries of Ministers in proportion to their labours, there would not be the difference there is at present between, for instance, the Local Government Board and the Board of Trade and the older offices in the State, and I think it quite possible that the time may not be very far distant when the whole question will be reconsidered. It is evident that the position of the President of the Board of Trade cannot be dealt with in an isolated way, and that there must be a general survey of the whole work of the Government Departments and a general and uniform plan adopted in their treatment. . . . Members of the Cabinet are on an equality, and the weight of individual opinion depends on the individual and not on any extraneous or fortuitous circumstances. . . . On the general question I quite recognise that the growth of the great offices which have been referred to has produced a certain anomaly in our present system, and at no distant period that anomaly may be considered and, if possible, corrected."

He saw the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his place, and he believed it was his intention to take part in the discussion. He hoped they were knocking at an open door in regard to this matter. He presumed that it was the question of cost which concerned the Chancellor of the Exchequer more than anything else, but he would point out that the cost of the inquiry could not be very large, and that was all they were asking for to-night. On the general question he thought it must be perfectly clear that, over a series of years, the more capable men in a Government would gravitate to the positions of higher *status* and salary, and that in the long run commerce and industry would be left to the less capable men. And what was of even more serious consideration was that the same argument applied to the permanent officials, whose salaries, though not proportionate to that of the chief, to some extent followed it. Those who gained high places in the civil service examinations would naturally select the vacancies in the better-paid and more important departments, leaving industry and commerce to be content with the services of those possessing less brilliant qualifications. Such a possibility could not be in the interests of the country, and they should do all they could to avoid it. He hoped that the Government would see their way to accept the Motion with a sincere desire to give it full and immediate effect.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the constitution of the Board of Trade has become obsolete, and this House is of opinion that a Department presided over by a Minister of Commerce and Industry, having the *status* of a principal Secretary of State, should be substituted for the present office, to which should be entrusted all matters more particularly appertaining to commerce and industry, and to that end that an inquiry should be forthwith instituted with the view of re-arranging the duties and functions of existing Departments."—(*Mr. Hoult.*)

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) rose to move as an Amendment to the Motion to leave out all after "that," and insert "with a view to administrative efficiency, this House calls on His Majesty's Government to undertake a redistribution of duties between the various Government Departments concerned, with due regard to the interests of labour." The mover of the proposal before the House was, he thought, a little unkind to His Majesty's Government. It was not for him to defend the Government against the attacks of one of their own supporters, but the Motion was prefaced by these words—

> "To call attention to the many disabilities to which our commerce and trade are subjected under the present Administration."

How could the hon. Member get out of that statement, but he would leave the Government to deal with their own supporter.

*MR. HOULT: It is not the Government I complain of, it is the administration of the office.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he was sorry to hear the seconder suggest in his admirable speech, with the greater part of which he entirely agreed, that the lower salaries of certain Departments prevent them from having the service of the best men. No one who knew the Government Departments all round could contend that men like the late Lord Farrer, Sir Francis Hopwood, or Sir Hugh Owen, were inferior in any respect to the men in the other Departments of the State. The mover of the Motion had made no attempt to prove his case, or to show how the present Administration had broken down. He was not concerned to deny that the constitution of the Board of Trade, and indeed many of their offices, was in some degree obsolete and deserving of inquiry, yet he thought that any Member who brought a matter of this sort before the House ought to make some more serious attempt to show where the Department had broken down. The only examples the hon. Member had given to the House at all were that the railway charges were too high, and that we needed more agents in all parts of the world. "More agents" was a question of how much the country was going to pay; and as to railway charges, that was not so much the weakness of the Government Department as the weakness of the House of Commons, which, in the face of railway interests allowed the rates to be so high.

So far as he could gather from the hon. Member who moved the Motion, what he desired was rather a change of name than anything else. But he did make one incautious admission that seemed inconsistent with the remainder of his speech. He said in one sentence that he desired to see the creation of an additional Department. Both the mover and the seconder said that the head of the Commercial Department of this country ought to be a man of high official rank, equal to a Secretary of State. In comparing this country with other countries, the right hon. Baronet maintained that we had about four times as many Ministers as any other country in the world; and when the House was asked to place more Ministers in Cabinet rank the hon. Member must remember that the size which Cabinets had reached was responsible for many of the weaknesses which Governments here had shown. The desired change in the Board of Trade could not stand alone, and there was some reason to fear that these general changes might lead to an increase in the total number of Ministers; therefore, this matter became material. There was a heresy which ran through a great deal of the argument in favour of the original Motion, namely, that the influence of a Minister in the Cabinet depended upon the size of his salary. Mr. Gladstone was once Vice-President of the Board of Trade, and exercised enormous influence when he held that minor office. Hon. Members would remember the influence exercised by the present Colonial Secretary in connection with Irish affairs when President of the Board of Trade and not directly connected with Irish administration. Who could contend for a moment that in Mr. Gladstone's fourth administration the influence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Montrose Burghs was limited by the fact that he was not a principal Secretary of State? That argument would not bear investigation. Not only was this matter, as the seconder of the Motion had admitted, bound up with the constitution of several other Departments of the State, but the argument which the hon. Gentleman had used, and in which he concurred in regard to the position of the clerks and the equality of the civil servants, extended to the majority of the other Departments of the State.

It was impossible, if once this question was raised, to abstain from placing the head of the Navy of this country in the rank of a Secretary of State, or the head of the Education Department. Scottish feeling would also compel them to raise the position of the head of the Scotch Department. He agreed with the argument of the seconder of the Motion that when once they touched this question at all they would have to make all the clerks in the offices of State equal. The present distinction was one which could not be defended. They should have to establish the principle of the absolute equality in salary and status of all the clerks in all the offices of State, with the doubtful exception, perhaps, of those superior persons the Foreign Office clerks, who, in the course of their business, were expected to dine out more, and to dance at more balls than any other officers of State. Not only had we larger Cabinets than those which guided the destinies of any other Parliament, but we had infinitely more paid Ministers than any other country. We had in this House forty paid Members, and while hon. Gentlemen opposite refused payment to ordinary Members, and condemned the payment of the Members of the Irish Party, or of poor men of ability who desired the chance of obtaining the free suffrages of the people, they seemed to have for their ideal that every Member of their party should be a Secretary of State. He asserted that the Cabinet in this country was nearly three times as numerous as any other Cabinet in the world, and that the paid Ministers in the two Houses of Parliament were five times more numerous than in the Parliament of any other people. Of course many changes had been made in the Government offices.

The seconder of the Motion had alluded to two Ministries which had been created by Resolution of this House, including the Department of Agriculture. Now it had always been known that that Minister had not a great amount of work to do, and in consequence of the deficiency of work they were told that on the 1st of April the Department of Ichthyology was to be transferred from the Board of Trade to the Ministry of Agriculture. To show how little considered hitherto many of those small changes had been, he might say that the superintendence of fisheries had been transferred not very long ago from the Home Office to the Board of Trade, because the foreshores of the coast had been transferred to that Department. The only connection which he could imagine there was between ichthyology and agriculture was that in some of the counties on the east coast sprats were used as a manure for the land. The ichthyologists would be like the settlers in some new country whose chickens held up their legs whenever they heard a waggon coming along. Then there was an Agricultural Department in Ireland of which his friend Mr. Plunkett, unfortunately not a Member of this House, was the head, and there was the Scottish Department which had been created in recent times. A large number of new Ministers had been proposed from time to time, but fortunately had not yet been adopted. In his own time he remembered that a Resolution of the House of Commons had been carried in favour of the creation of a Ministry of Justice, but nothing had been done. There had also been proposals for the creation of a Ministry of Health apart from the Local Government Board, and of a Ministry of Merchant Shipping and Seamen, and of a Ministry of Labour.

As to this particular proposal dealing with the Board of Trade, he should like to ask the House to consider a little more closely the argument of the mover of the Resolution. That hon. Gentleman alluded to the Commercial Department of the Foreign Office, and apparently he desired to shift that Department from the Foreign Office and place it in the new Ministry of Commerce. The value of that Department of the Foreign Office had long been disputed, but there was so much to be said on both sides of the question that he would pass the topic by. There had no doubt been a certain amount of discontent with the Board of Trade, probably unjust, among the commercial classes. He thought that that discontent had been caused by what he would call purely mechanical causes. The Board of Trade was divided into many Departments, most of them housed in different buildings, in different parts of the town. When some of them were Members of the Committee, presided over by the Home Secretary, on the re-housing of the Departments of State, one of the Departments which claimed to be placed under a single roof was the Board of Trade, but for some mysterious reason the Board of Trade alone was the Department knocked out of that scheme. The mechanical difficulty to which he had referred undoubtedly caused some friction, and led to some temporary unpopularity of the Board of Trade. There were a number of gentlemen who wished to see the creation of a Ministry of Commerce with a Secretary of State at its head in whom they could have confidence. He had a little suspicion of that desire, and there was something to be said on the other side. He gathered from the Resolution on the Paper, and from the speech of the mover, but not from the speech of the seconder, that those who framed the Resolution wished to bring all matters connected with commerce and industry into the new Ministry; but that would include all matters relating to the administration of the Factory Laws and of the Coal Mines and Metalliferous Mines Acts. Undoubtedly these were covered by the words of the Resolution, although he was glad to hear that that view was repudiated by the hon. Gentleman above the Gangway. He submitted that the House ought not to carry a Resolution containing those words without probing the matter to the bottom. He did not think they could deal efficiently with this question without considering in one sense or another the position in which the Labour Laws were to stand to the new Ministry of Commerce.

Allusion had been made to the examples set up by foreign countries where there was a Ministry of Commerce and Industry; and special reference had been made to France and Germany, which had highly developed factory legislation. It must be remembered by those who desired to see a great commercial magnate at the head of the Ministry of Commerce that labour had a claim equal to that of capital to direct the Department. In France, which was the most highly developed country in this respect, the Minister of Commerce was equally the Minister of Industry. What was the consequence? The most distinguished Minister of Commerce and Industry which that country had had was not a great commercial magnate, not what was called "a safe man" but a Socialist, M. Millerand, and there was the remarkable fact that the Chancellor of the German Empire, speaking in the name of the German Emperor himself said His Imperial Majesty approved of M. Millerand's policy, and hoped to be able to find a man like him for Germany. He appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, representing as he had done until very recently, with distinction the Department concerned with the laws relating to factories and workshops and mines, he would be satisfied that the administration of these laws should pass, without very careful inquiry, into the hands of a mere Ministry of Commerce.

At the present time a great deal of work was thrown on the Board of Trade in connection with the administration of Labour Laws. But there was also conciliation work which might develop by and by into compulsory arbitration. Undoubtedly the man the commercial classes and the Chambers of Commerce desired to have at the head of the new Ministry would not be exactly the type of man whom the labouring classes would choose in such a case as the Penrhyn dispute. Then the President of the Board of Trade was the sweet little cherub who sat up aloft to take care of merchant seamen. He had also the protection of railway servants. In addition to that there was the Labour Department of the Board of Trade itself which was mainly statistical. And there was the function of the Board of Trade, which was repeatedly referred to in the Fair Wage Committee, of advising all other Departments, especially those of the Army and Navy, upon questions of wages. They could not, therefore, on behalf of labour consent for a moment to pass this Resolution without thinking out all these questions, and without seeing exactly where they were going. He could not but think that the result of trying to make the Board of Trade a more purely commercial Department must be to force these questions out of the Board of Trade, or the Labour Department of the Board of Trade, into the Home Office, and if that were done, the Home Office would become virtually a Ministry of Labour and Police. The Local Government Board, which year by year had become more and more the legatee of the Home Office, would also be affected, and would have to deal with such questions as the housing of the working classes in London, now at the Home Office.

In common with the seconder of the Resolution, he thought that the Government would have to oppose the Motion. He agreed with the seconder of the Resolution on two large points, although these were not struck at in the terms of the Resolution. They ought to equalise the salaries and the positions of the clerks in the Government Departments. He did not attach so much importance to the salaries of the heads of the Government Departments. Mr. Gladstone used to argue that there were numerous advantages in the variety of the salaries of the heads of the Departments. He also agreed with the mover of the Resolution in a point which, though not perhaps material, was of importance from a sentimental view, viz., that there was an advantage in getting rid of the cumbrous form of Boards which were not real Boards. In making a change of name they might seem to substitute real personal responsibility for an imaginary collective responsibility. Of course those Boards never met; they never had met, and they were carried on deliberately as a sham. If they considered the great difficulties of treating this question from the point of view of capital on one hand, and labour on the other, it was clear that the Resolution, as it stood on the Paper, could not be adopted, and that it was for the Government, which alone could deal with the subject with due responsibility and full knowledge of facts, to deal with the whole question and themselves make a proposal to the House of Commons.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'with a view to administrative efficiency, this House calls on His Majesty's Government to undertake a redistribution of duties between the various Government Departments concerned, with due regard to the interests of labour.'"—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I do not want to refer so much to what has been desired by Chambers of Commerce so frequently, and I would rather say that I think there is a prevalent general feeling that the commerce and industry of this country are not only matters of paramount importance, but that they deserve a great deal more consideration and attention than they have hitherto received. That, I think, is the general feeling, and it is believed, I think with some force, that if a Minister of Commerce possessing the higher official *status* which must ensure his presence in the Cabinet at all times —if a Minister of that class is appointed, those interests will necessarily command more constant observation and attention than has been the case in the past. I would also say that the same observations apply to the Department. If there be a Department, as in agriculture and education, specially devoted to the commerce and industry of the country, I think a lever will be brought to bear upon commercial questions, which has, to some extent, hitherto been wanting, I would add that all this would carry with it proper responsibility on the part of the Minister and the Department, occupying a very prominent position, would be amenable from that position to this House. In that way I think we shall get what is desired, namely, a real Intelligence Department for commerce and industry in this country—constantly observant, not aggressive, but, at the same time, desirous of rendering all possible help to traders in all parts of the world, and capable of giving attention to those commercial and industrial problems which are most complex and pressing, and which lie at the root of the prosperity of the nations of the world.

As to the history of the Board of Trade, it has been spoken of as obsolete, but I venture to call it an anachronism and a fiction, because there is no Board, and if we analyse the composition of the Board it appears ridiculous. The present Board includes the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Speaker of the House of Commons, and what is still more singular, the Speaker of the Irish House of Commons. While we speak of the Board as possessing this character, it is a singular historical circumstance that archbishops have not only intervened in matters of education but within 100 years an Archbishop of Canterbury has attended the Board of Trade to emphasise the importance of protecting the trade of Manchester, which points to the obsolete character of the Board and of such an intervention. The fact remains that, while agriculture and education and other Departments have all been formed, the greatest commercial nation of the world has not a Department of Commerce in the broadest and most practical sense, and that is a defect, as we think, in the constitution of our commercial system which we are anxious to amend. Of course, upon a matter of this sort, my right hon. friend opposite speaks with the highest authority. I am not going to say that the Resolution proposes anything exactly as one would wish it, and I should myself take exception to some portion of it.

Anything of this sort, of course, must be preceded by the fullest inquiry, and all the Resolution proposes, and all we ask, is that the time has come when this inquiry should be held.

We quite admit the relevancy of all these industrial and other problems which my right hon. friend has referred to. While the opinion of Chambers of Commerce and of the commercial world is practically unanimous, they are sufficiently practical people to see that a great change of this sort cannot be made without taking into account the many questions involved, and they ask for a tribunal which shall look at all sides of the question. With regard to what my right hon. friend has said, I may say that what I think we do require is a better allocation of the duties of Ministers. What we have done for education we want to do for commerce—we want more reorganisation, more co-ordination, and less overlapping of duties, and a greater concentration of the commercial work of the Department.

Let me for the moment ask, what is the wonderful medley with which the Board of Trade deals? It deals with shipping and with fisheries, and why the fisheries should be transplanted into the Board of Agriculture is one of the questions which, I think, will have to be inquired into. The Board of Trade also has to look after the harbours, labour and industrial arbitrations, railways, electric lighting, and many other matters, and yet the *status* of the President of the Board of Trade is distinctly inferior to that of a Secretary of State. We think that if these duties are so various, so exacting, and so responsible in these days amid the rivalries of commerce, that *status* becomes an important question, and a Minister of Commerce for this country should have the highest *status* that can be given to him in comparison with other Ministers. Let me direct attention for a moment to the extraordinary complexity of the duties, the commercial duties even, which are pressed upon the Board of Trade at the present time. Practically the Board of Trade is restricted to internal commerce, and yet our foreign over-sea commerce, of the value of something like £1,000,000,000 a year, is practically in the hands of some other Department. Surely we must view our trade as a whole, for the complement of our home and foreign trade are the complement of each other, and no true view of the commercial position of the country can be taken unless both are viewed from a similar standpoint. Therefore, I say there should be some allocation of the duties of foreign commerce through our Consuls.

As my right hon. friend has said, we have often had this matter before us, but nevertheless, it is a great anomaly that you should have the Board of Trade or Commerce as at present constituted, and that all the over-sea work should be done by another Department. I have the honour to be a member of the Commercial Intelligence Department of the Board of Trade, and there I see the complexity of the distribution of our commercial intelligence. We have there represented the Board of Trade and the Foreign Office, which plays an important part owing to its consular and other duties. The India Office and the Colonial Office are also represented, and I venture to say that if our Consular work was under the direction of a distinctly Commercial and Trade Department we should very quickly have a great alteration in many of the Consular reports, some of which are excellent, but the tone of nearly all of them would be materially altered. If we compare the work of our Consuls with the commercial reports furnished by the representatives of the United States and the rapidity with which they produce special and interim reports, we should find that our Consuls are not within the bounds of comparison, and if you had a Department of Commerce the whole tone of those reports would be altered and you would have a commercial aspect given to your Consular reports. Again, with regard to the appointment of Consuls, I think the same change would manifest itself. Instead of being of a more diplomatic character I think those representing us would be more commercial, and though I quite agree with the demand for a commercial head, that is a personal question which it is unnecessary to discuss, and many of those who have not been commercial men have admirably administered the trade affairs of this country. I venture to say that the alteration I suggest would give a commercial aspect to a commercial question, and would give us a more true representation of the commercial feeling of the country.

This is not, I submit, a mere question of names, for I believe it to have a much more vital significance. I think that it is not a question of a new Ministry either, but it is rather the increase of some duties of the Minister of Commerce or the President of the Board of Trade, and a very considerable limitation of the duties of other Ministers. It is more a matter of the allocation of duties, and it is a very good thing for re-organisation, and for these reasons I venture to think there is real ground for the inquiries which, I hope, may precede the change. My right hon. friend has taxed my hon. friends who have previously spoken, with rather exceeding the true state of things with regard to other countries. I very respectfully venture to differ from my right hon. friend. In Germany there is a distinct Ministry of Commerce, though I admit it is included under the fourth Department of the Home Office. Nevertheless it is a distinctly commercial headship. There is also a Ministry of Commerce in Prussia. If any one doubts that our great commercial rival, Germany, has not organised her commercial departments, both of the State and also of her voluntary associations, on a very different basis to that which we have adopted in this country—if any one supposes that for a moment, they are vastly mistaken. I know that in relation to many trade matters, the German Emperor himself has acted as his own commercial Minister in America, showing that His Majesty takes the greatest interest in the commercial development of Germany. I submit that in France there is a distinct Ministry of Commerce. It is quite true that in France some questions are otherwise dealt with, but the trade organisation there is adapted in the highest degree—although it is not always successful—to bring official action into touch with trade matters, and sometimes this action is very successful.

In the case of the United States my hon. friend has quite correctly stated that a similar suggestion to this was only made very recently, but practically it was at once carried out, and in the United States the organisation for trade purposes and the assistance given by the Government is manifest in almost every Department. Let us take the instance of one of our colonies which some of us have recently visited. There the commercial development is almost beyond belief—I am referring to Canada. In almost every moderate sized town in Canada there are what they call Boards of Trade, and it is the one country which has especially a Ministry of Commerce devoted solely to the purpose of always promoting in every form the commercial development of the country. We want to put that great vital force behind the commerce of our own country; that force should be omnipresent, not interfering, always available and constantly helping the trader in new fields and markets. We fully recognise that there must be commercial development entirely independent of the Government; this is the very mainspring of a great commerce, but when other nations are helping their people, and Ministries of Commerce devoting large funds, great organisations, and the highest ministerial ability to the help of their traders, then I say we want something behind the people of this country to do the same thing. We respectfully submit to the House that whatever may be thought of the Resolution there is something underlying this question which needs alteration, and certainly organisation, and an inquiry may present to the House the means of making a great reform and a new departure in the interests of the commerce of our country.

*MR. BELL (Derby) said the Resolution which had been moved by the hon. Member and the Amendment which had been moved by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean were both proposals which he was inclined to support. The Motion asked for an inquiry to be held with a view of distributing the work amongst the various Departments of the Board of Trade, and the Amendment asked that there should be a re-distribution of the work amongst the various Government Departments. He thought there were several reasons which might be advanced in support of the Amendment, and he for one felt that there were some things at any rate in connection with the Board of Trade Department that might very reasonably be transferred to other Departments. He referred more particularly to the legislation introduced during recent years giving the Board of Trade additional work on the same lines as the work administered by the Home Office, and it would then practically resolve itself into a question of what would the Minister be called at the head of the Board of Trade. It seemed to him to be a question more of a title or name than of anything else. Whether the right hon. Gentleman who now presided over the Board of Trade should hold the office of Minister of Commerce, or whether some other gentleman would replace him was a question to be hereafter decided. Without assuming for a moment that the same right hon. Gentleman would not retain the position at the Board of Trade, or whether he would be called the President of the Board of Trade or the Minister of Commerce, he believed the right hon. Gentleman who now held that position was quite competent and able to do the work under either title. Of course the question of the salary of the President of the Board of Trade, if he were called the Minister of Commerce, was to his mind a very small matter indeed. He could scarcely believe that there was any one Member of that House who would, even under the present circumstances, and with his present title, object to the salary of the President of the Board of Trade being raised to a proper sum. He held that the President of the Board of Trade was under paid as compared with the Ministers of other Departments, and one of the things which had rather occurred to him as being unfair was, that when they had to raise some question about the administration of the Board of Trade they were obliged to move a reduction of his salary in order to bring about a discussion, instead of moving that his salary be raised.

He had on many occasions felt that he should like to get more work out of the Board of Trade, and in order to bring that before the House he thought it was a very wrong way of going about it to have to move that the right hon. Gentleman's salary be reduced in order to get more work out of him. He should be very sorry to know that there was anyone amongst the class whom he represented who would be against even the terms of this Resolution, and no man, be he a commercial man or a labourer, would put anything in the way of increasing the commerce or trade of this country. If they could assist and foster that trade and commerce in any way, it was the duty of them all to do everything they could in that direction. He had listened with very much attention to what was said by the hon. Member for Islington. He had received communications from the Board of Trade on many occasions, and they had always commenced by saying "I am requested by the Board of Trade to say so and so." Now he understood that Mr. Speaker was one of the members of the Board of Trade, it might perhaps be an advantage in the future to those whom he represented and for whom he sometimes required some attention, that he might perhaps be able to induce Mr. Speaker, as one of the Members of the Board, to use his influence in that direction. He supposed that the Archbishop of Canterbury did not give very much attention to the work of the Board of Trade, and he would not be within his reach for this purpose so much as Mr. Speaker. However, the time had undoubtedly arrived when something should be done in this direction, and he had been asked by the Chambers of Commerce in the borough he had the honour to represent to give his support to this Motion, and he had risen for the purpose of saying these few words in regard to this Resolution. At the same time he should like, if possible, to support the Amendment which, he thought, was equally agreeable to those who supported the Motion.

MR. RANDLES (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said it was of the greatest importance that they should have their various Departments in good order, but unless they had their commercial position maintained and secured, the increased population and the vastly increased charges which they as a nation were undertaking, would have but little foundation on which to rest. He thought when the Associated Chambers of Commerce that day gave attention to this subject, they were dealing with the question with all the emphasis which they could place upon it, and this question would receive emphasis from a corresponding body of persons representing the labouring or the working classes, had they also been assembled in congress, because he believed that the interests of the working classes were now being fully recognised by them as being bound up with our commercial and industrial prosperity, and it would be the case that greater attention would be paid to questions of this kind by the electorate in the future than had been the case hitherto. He thought that the time had come when some inquiry should be instituted to find out whether they, as a commercial nation, were properly represented, without having a commercial Department, with authority to deal, not only with questions of electric lighting and things of that kind, but also with wider commercial interests in which they were all so much engaged. He thought they ought to have a Department which would give particular attention to securing foreign trade. Upon this point he might instance the tin plate trade of America. When the United States Government made up its mind that the trade should be transferred from South Wales to the United States they set to work to secure the transfer, and one of the Departments was charged with that particnlar duty.

Again, if a foreign Government like Russia determined to capture a particular market, say, for instance, the Persian, it at once laid itself out to do so, and appointed persons whose business it was to give effect to its policy. But in this country we had nothing corresponding to that, and the meaning of the Resolution was that we should have a Commander-in-Chief of commerce, who would keep in close touch with all commercial questions and would see, when any particular interest required backing up by the Government, that it received the necessary support. How that was to be accomplished was merely a matter of detail. What they wanted to secure was that the Government should take the matter in hand and institute an inquiry as to the best way of dealing with it. They wanted to concentrate the authority in the hands of a responsible Minister. He had no doubt that the President of the Board of Trade would hesitate to ask for an increase of staff and of salary, but it certainly was desirable that the responsibility should be placed on his shoulders, and that he should be given sufficient power and authority to enable him to carry out effectually the policy when once decided upon. If they gave him that power and called him, say, the Minister of Commerce and Industry, he might very well be assisted by representatives from each of the Departments concerned—the India, Colonial, and Foreign Offices—who should keep him informed on commercial matters in which they were interested and advise him as to what was desirable to be done. By doing so we should be able to maintain our supremacy as a commercial nation.

We must not continue to rely on arrangements which served generations ago. It was comparatively easy when we were a manufacturing and industrial nation, as distinguished from agricultural countries, to maintain our supremacy in trade. All we then wanted was cheap labour. Now, however, we were seeking, not so much cheap labour as more highly skilled labour. It was necessary also that we should have an efficient Intelligence Department, to which we could apply in case of difficulty. Such a difficulty, for instance, had arisen in regard to shipping matters. It was a noteworthy fact that a vast proportion of the iron and steel sent into India was despatched from continental ports and not from this country; yet India was our natural market, and it might be fairly asked why it was that we did not supply it. The reason might be found in the fact that owing to the action of shipping rings it cost from 2s. 6d to 5s. per ton more to ship this material from Liverpool than it did from Antwerp, and he believed that if we had a Minister of Commerce he would be able to deal with questions of that sort in an authoritative manner. He hoped and believed the Government would consent to take the action indicated in the Motion in the interests of our trade and commerce, and that they would direct an inquiry with a view to such a redistribution of responsibility as would render the office of real commercial advantage to the people of this country.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S): There are a number of difficult questions involved in this Motion which are not always sufficiently distinguished in the debates that take place upon this subject. There are questions of name and of substance. There is the question of redistributing the work done by different Departments, and of adding responsibilities to the Minister charged with looking after commercial matters. I will first deal with the question of the change in the name of the Department. It really does not make the slightest difference what you call it. The rose will not smell any sweeter in consequence. The Board of Trade is practically the Ministry of Commerce. The Minister is solely responsible and is entirely independent. There is nothing obsolete in the constitution of the Department. It has a number of most efficient permanent and Parliamentary secretaries, and if there are not sufficient heads of Departments, it is for the President to represent to the Treasury the necessity for increasing the number, and of having more salaries and more men. It is quite true that, owing to an historical accident, the President of the Board of Trade has never become a Secretary of State. Sixty years ago, when Mr. Gladstone was at the Board of Trade, it had practically nothing to do but to watch tariffs, and to advise the Government of the day in regard thereto. All the work the Board of Trade now does has been practically added by statute during the last sixty or seventy years. The duties of the Department are now extremely multifarious and heavy. I suppose there is no Department of the State which has to undertake so many different kinds of work. The Board of Trade is required to look after railways, shipping, fishery and harbour works, labour, electric lighting, tramways, bankruptcy, tariffs, and weights and measures; and when I point out also that it has to deal with industrial and commercial statistics, I do not think I have even then exhausted the list of its duties.

It is obvious, if you look at the work from the point of view of its importance, that the holder of the office is well entitled to be raised to the *status* of a Secretary of State. We had a debate on this subject five years ago, when Sir Henry Northcote, now the Governor-General of Bombay, brought forward a Motion upon it. On that occasion there was a general consensus of opinion that a good case was made out for putting the President of the Board of Trade on a level with Secretaries of State or the First Lord of the Admiralty. But that is not the most important part of the question. I do not think a Minister of Commerce would be able to do much more for commerce than the President of the Board of Trade now does. I do not think he would have any more influence in this House. These things depend, not on the office, but on personality, and on the amount of ability, energy, and activity put into the work. Still, considering the important part that commerce plays in our national life, it may well be said that the Minister of Commerce ought to hold as high a position as a Secretary of State.

But let us come to what is really a most important question, and it is the question of the readjustment of the work done in these Departments. Three different suggestions have been made. One, put forward by the mover of the Amendment, was that part of the work now discharged by the Board of Trade should be transferred to the Home Office; a second was that part of the work now done by the Foreign Office should, in future, be entrusted to the Board of Trade; and a third was that a new Minister should be created. With regard to the suggestion that matters relating to labour should go to the Home Office, I see two difficulties in the way of that course being adopted. In the first place, the Home Office is already heavily worked; it has quite as much work as one Minister can very well discharge. The second difficulty is this, that much of the work which would be carried over under that suggestion would be concerned with railway servants and merchant seamen. The Board of Trade has a great deal to do with railway matters. It has to deal with the question of rates; it has to look after the inspection of railroads; and it has to hold inquiries into accidents; and if you are going to transfer to another body the duty of dealing with such questions as the hours of labour, I think it is likely to lead to much confusion and trouble. The same argument applies to merchant shipping. It would still be necessary to leave many matters affecting merchant shipping in the hands of the Board of Trade, and it would be very inconvenient to carry over to the Home Office that part of the duty which relates to the protection of sailors. I think, therefore, on the balance of consideration, it will probably be found better to keep these two departments of labour work with the Board of Trade. Let me say, however, that my experience at the Board of Trade was that there was no serious practical difficulty arising from the fact that some of these labour duties were not in its hands. I know that was the opinion of my right hon. friend the late Home Secretary. We frequently had occasion to consult and discuss, we endeavoured to agree to work on the same lines and principles, and, as I say, no practical difficulty was caused by the fact that part of the work was in his hands and part in mine.

I now come to another point. The hon. Member for South Islington has suggested that certain work which is done under the direction of the Foreign Office should be transferred to the Board of Trade. In that case, surely, it would be necessary to transfer to the same Department the appointment of Consuls. These Consuls have very often to discharge diplomatic duties, and it would be most inconvenient that duties of such a nature, which are part of the settled policy of this country, should be carried out under the direction of any Department except that which is generally responsible for diplomatic work—viz. the Foreign Office. I should like to say, however, that the Foreign Office is very much to be blamed for not taking more pains to secure the appointment of men with commercial knowledge and skill to the office of Consul. Occasions have frequently arisen in which appointments to these Consular posts have been made without any regard being had to the commercial work to be performed. It is suggested that we should create a new Ministry of Labour, and I can quite understand that being asked for. But there are great objections to increasing more than is absolutely necessary the number of Departments, because one of the first results of such an increase is that those who are interested in a new Department demand that the holder of it shall have a seat in the Cabinet. I recollect what occurred with regard to the Scottish Office in 1884-5. We then appointed a Secretary for Scotland, and the very first thing that was asked for was that he should have a seat in the Cabinet. Another objection to these increases of Departments is that we do not get Cabinet Government in the old sense of the word when a Cabinet becomes too large. I hope, therefore, the House will pause before it presses for the creation of more offices than are absolutely necessary.

I come lastly to a question which is really in the minds of most hon. Members who have supported this Motion, and is certainly in the minds of the Chambers of Commerce, and that is the idea that the Government should do more for commerce than it does at present. There is but one opinion as to the importance of the interests of trade being carefully looked after by a Government Department, but I think it is doubtful whether a Minister of Commerce could do more for commerce than is now being done by the Board of Trade. I would ask hon. Members what it is they think the Government can do for commerce which it does not now do? I am persuaded that no Government would refuse to do anything for commerce which commercial men want. But will hon. Gentlemen tell us what they do want? I have heard one practical illustration given this evening. The hon. Member who last spoke pointed out what was done by the Government of the United States when they determined to domesticate the tinplate industry. But when they did that they had no Minister of Commerce. What was done was done, not by a

Minister of Commerce, but by the action of a Committee of Congress, and it was accomplished by imposing practically prohibitive tariffs on tinplates imported from this country. If the hon. Member wishes that to be done let him say so. That, however, is a question of policy which has nothing whatever to do with the establishment of a Ministry of Commerce.

MR. RANDLES: The point I wished to make was that the Government which dealt with that question did succeed in obtaining certain commercial results. I did not say whether the methods adopted were right or wrong. I only pointed out that the Government charged itself with the duty, and I want our Government to charge itself with like duties. I leave it to say how it will accomplish the object we have in view.

MR. BRYCE: It was not an improvement in the sense of administration; it was the Legislature, and this Legislature could, if it pleased, impose a particular trade duty on some foreign product, and perhaps succeed in domesticating that product in this country. But that is not a matter for the Government; it is a matter for the Legislature. What is really wanted by the hon. Member, and by many commercial men who urge this new policy, is legislation; that is to say, they want new powers conferred on the Board of Trade. It would be possible for this House to give the Board of Trade further powers for dealing with railway rates. Why is that not done? Because the House has felt that the railway dividends are not so large as to bear diminution, and also because the railway interest is so very strong. It is not due to any laxity on the part of the Board of Trade; in most cases what is wanted is legislation. The hon. Member for South Islington says we ought to do all we can to help our merchants by collecting and diffusing information. Something has been lately done in that direction by the creation of an Intelligence Department, and I hope that more will be done. No President of the Board of Trade or Minister of Commerce would deserve to hold his position if he did not give his constant and cordial attention to any practical suggestions of this kind, either from Chambers of Commerce or from individual traders.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT said the work of the Intelligence Department was on a very small scale, both pecuniarily and otherwise.

MR. BRYCE: But it is a step in the right direction, and no doubt my right hon. friend will be glad to develop it. I believe it may be more fully developed by making fuller use of the Consuls, and by sending out commercial Attachés, travellers or visitors to report on industries in foreign countries and the openings for British trade. That is being done already, and it will be done on a still larger scale. If the House or the Chambers of Commerce wish for more to be done in this direction it is for them to particularise their wishes, instead of making general complaints with which it is difficult to deal. I entirely agree with the spirit of the Motion, but should have thought an inquiry by a Committee was not needed—that it would have been perfectly possible for the Government themselves, having the materials at their disposal, to make the necessary inquiry and prepare a scheme.

If the Government think an inquiry by a Committee will be more complete, or will give more satisfaction, I do not think there will be any difference of opinion in the House on the point. In one way or another it is clear that the House desires to see the Board of Trade receive the full *status* of a Secretaryship of State, and an inquiry made as to whether any redistribution of duties can usefully be effected. I hope therefore the Government will be able to give an answer, at any rate favourable in spirit, to the request which has been addressed to them.

*MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford) said the general feeling was that the Board of Trade had imposed upon it a herculean task in having to deal with the commerce of this country. In the course of the debate, however, remarks had been made which would not further the desired improvement. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean had seemed to imply that because improvement was required in all Departments one Department in particular should not be dealt with.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I said that this Department could not be dealt with, for reasons which I gave, without involving changes in one, if not two, others.

*MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR contended that improvement was necessary in this particular Department above all others, and if an inquiry could be instituted for the purpose of setting our House in order it would do a great amount of good. The time allocated to the debate was so limited that it was impossible to go into the details of the case for the Motion; all that could be done was merely to glance at the disabilities under which this country suffered. Only recently the Patent Laws had been re-adjusted, while bankruptcy legislation was still as defective as it could be. Bankrupts were on the increase, and many bankruptcies resulted in greater riches to the bankrupt. That our mercantile marine was slipping away from us was shown by the recent purchase of the Leyland Line and the creation of the Morgan Combine. With a view to showing the disabilities under which the home producer suffered by the advantages given to exporters from other countries, the hon. Member quoted railway and shipping rates, from which it appeared that goods could be carried from New York to Sydney for 15s. per ton, while from Liverpool in the same vessels the rate was 40s. per ton. As to the Irish railway rates, if a man wished to send a piano inland it was often better for him to send it first to New York or Liverpool, and have it re-shipped from there.

Our Consuls abroad ought to be the ears and eyes of Great Britain, but they were nothing of the kind. This was partly due to the fact that a very large proportion of them were foreigners, while their rate of pay came out at £19 per head, which was not sufficient to secure reliable information. Our commercial attaché at Paris had to report not only on Paris but on the whole of France, with Belgium and Switzerland thrown in. Similarly the commercial attaché at Berlin had to deal with Germany, Sweden, Holland, and Norway; while the one at Vienna was responsible for Hungary, Austria, Greece, and Italy. If this country desired to know what was going on abroad the number of commercial attachés and agents would have to be increased. The Patent Laws had recently been improved, but he found that out of £196,000 taken in fees no less than £100,000 profit was made, whereas in America out of £246,000 only £20,000 profit was made, the balance being used to protect the inventors and put them on a better footing. It was not his view that a new Department should be created. Whether the Chief of the Department was called the President of the Board of Trade or Minister of Commerce was immaterial. What was wanted was an inquiry to see what could be done to improve the work connected with the commerce of the country. At present trade was hampered, and our commerce was fast disappearing. Other countries were securing our trade, not only in neutral markets but in our colonies. He hoped, therefore, the Government would grant the inquiry, so that the country might see that the questions of commercial adminstration were receiving attention, and that they might hope for a reform at an early date.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): I do not propose to speak at any length, but before the debate closes the House will expect to hear in what light the Government view this proposal, and the action they are prepared to take in the matter. This is by no means a new matter; it has been constantly before the House of Commons. Year after year Motions of a similar character have been passed by Chambers of Commerce, and I think there can be no doubt whatever that commercial and public feeling generally tends very distinctly in the direction suggested by the Resolution. But while there is this general feeling that the *status* of the Board of Trade ought to be raised, I am afraid that too great expectations are being indulged in as to the results such a change would carry with it. No doubt the Board of Trade as at present constituted cannot well be defended on ordinary business lines. It was constituted a great many years ago, when the trade of this country was much less than at present; and while, on the whole, it has no doubt performed exceedingly well the work for which it was called into being, no one would contemplate for a moment instituting a Department of this kind to take charge of the industry and trade of the country if they did not find it to their hand. But although it is an anomaly, and in some respects an absurdity, as at present constituted, I do not think the efficiency of the Board of Trade for its work is at all impaired by the fact that it is a Board and not a Secretaryship of State. The President of the Board of Trade is a responsible Minister, and just as much responsible to Parliament for the work done by the Board of Trade as any other Minister whose Department is differently constituted. I think that there is a great deal to be said for reforming the constitution of the Board of Trade in the way desired; but, as I have said, I rather fear that undue expectations are entertained as to what the result of such a reform will be. Hon. Gentlemen seem to think that shipping rings will at once be abolished, that railway rates will be at once reduced to a proper level, and that the Consular Service will be at once remodelled in the way the commercial community desire. All these things are just as capable of reform under the existing state of things as they would be under a reformed Board of Trade called a Ministry of Commerce. As the right hon. Member for Aberdeen has said, these are matters which Parliament ought to take in hand if we are to have any great reform in regard to them. They must be done by legislative and not by departmental action.

I should like to say a word with reference to the Consular service, to which many hon. Members referred. I do not know whether it is known to the House that a Committee is at present sitting in order to see whether reforms cannot be made in the manner of appointing Consuls, with a view to obtaining the services of men who are more familiar with commercial matters than many of our present Consuls are. Of course we must not lose sight of the fact that our Consuls perform two different kinds of duties. They have to attend to commercial matters, and their services must always be available with regard to diplomatic matters; and when it is suggested that this matter ought to be taken out of the hands of the Foreign Office and placed entirely in the hands of the Board of Trade I venture to think that an arrangement of that kind would seriously hamper the diplomatic duties of our Consuls, and I am rather afraid that the advantage which the commercial community think would be derived by the appointment of Consuls by the Board of Trade would be very dearly purchased. It is not my purpose to enter minutely into the various matters which have been discussed; but we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that public feeling has grown, and is growing, in connection with this matter; and although the mere change from the President of the Board of Trade to a Minister holding the *status* of a Secretary of State would not in itself do as much as some people imagine, yet one cannot disguise from oneself that there is a belief, I think a well founded belief, that the influence of a Minister who occupies the position of a Secretary of State would be greater than that of the Minister who occupied the position of President of the Board of Trade. I do not share that view; but I am quite certain that there is a feeling of that kind which we cannot ignore.

We cannot, however, accept the Motion before the House, because it starts with the assumption that there is to be a Minister of Commerce and Industry, having the *status* of a principal Secretary of State. That is a matter which ought to be embraced in the inquiry. There is no doubt whatever, that there is considerable overlapping of work; and it is only right and proper that in considering this matter we should consider the re-distribution of the work with a view to more effectual administration. I agree with a great deal that was said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean. I think it would be a great mistake to proceed as drastically as some people desire; but there is no doubt that the manner in which the work is distributed between the various Departments is one which might well undergo some change. But in considering that matter, it is quite impossible to confine our attention wholly to the Board of Trade. It is quite true that of late years the Board of Trade has had enormous responsibilities put upon it. So it is with the Local Government Board. For many years, there has hardly been a session in which some important extra duties have not been put upon the Local Government Board. The growth of its staff has been very great, and for a large number of purposes it has now become the Ministry of the Interior. Therefore, in considering the *status* of the Board of Trade, we must also consider the *status* of the Local Government Board; and in considering the distribution of work and also the position of the Ministers responsible, both at the Board of Trade and the Local Government Board, I agree that we should also consider the position of the staffs.

I can speak from experience that the duties of the staffs at the Board of Trade and the Local Government Board are most admirably performed. I have now been in a considerable number of offices, and I can say with conviction and with absolute truth that no Departments of the State possess more highly trained and efficient officers than the Local Government Board and the Board of Trade. Therefore, in considering the position of these two offices, we must also consider the position of their officials. We are then agreed that there should be an inquiry, but I do not commit myself as to the nature of the inquiry. I do not think it desirable that it should be referred to a Committee of the House of Commons, as the Government ought to take some considerable responsibility in the matter and not devolve it on a Committee of the House. If the House will accept my undertaking that an inquiry shall be instituted both into the position of these Departments and into the distribution of their work, I am prepared to give it; and I will consider with my colleagues what the nature of the tribunal should be. In these circumstances, I hope that the movers of the Resolution and the Amendment will not press their Motions.

* MR. HOULT said that after the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, he would ask leave to withdraw his Motion.

* SIR CHARLES DILKE said he also desired to withdraw his Motion.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

BANK HOLIDAYS (IRELAND) BILL.

(In Committee.)

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said that at the request of the Attorney General for Ireland, he would postpone the Committee stage until next Tuesday, in order to enable the hon. Gentleman to ascertain whether any inconvenience would be caused to Irish bankers by the Bill. He did not anticipate that any inconvenience would arise, and he therefore hoped that on Tuesday next the Bill would be unopposed.

The House adjourned at ten minutes before Twelve o'clock.

In pursuance of Standing Order No. 1, "Sittings of the House," I hereby nominate—

The Right Hon. Arthur Frederick Jeffreys,

The Right Hon. Charles Beilby Stuart-Wortley,

The Right Hon. Henry Hobhouse,
Mr. John Edward Ellis, and
Mr Edward Blake,

to act during this session as temporary Chairmen of Committees when requested by the Chairman of Ways and Means.

WILLIAM COURT GULLY,
Speaker.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 4th March, 1903.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

NEW WRIT.

For the County of Sussex (Eastern or Rye Division), in the room of Colonel Arthur Montagu Brookfield, His Majesty's Consul at Monte Video.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*)

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

LONDON BUILDING ACT (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Order [24th February] that the London Building Acts (Amendment) Bill be read a second time, read, and discharged—Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

ROMFORD AND DISTRICT TRAMWAYS BILL.

"To authorise the Empire Electric Light and Power Company, Limited, to construct tramways in Romford and the adjoining districts in the County of Essex; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Kinellar; Newhills; Garioch; Arbilot; Stirling; Strathdon; Old Deer; Maryton; Auchterarder; Cumbraes; Dalziel; and Bothwell; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from West Dulwich, in favour, to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LOCAL TAXATION (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Copy presented, of Index to the Reports of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

FOREIGN TRADE AND COMMERCE.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd March; *Mr. Gerald Balfour*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 54.]

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION ACT, 1888.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Board of Trade, under the provisions of the said Act, for the variation of their Order creating the Devon Sea Fisheries District, together with Report by Inspector on Inquiry [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 55.]

CENSUS OF SCOTLAND, 1901.

Copy presented, of Eleventh Decennial Census of the population of Scotland, taken 31st March, 1901, with Report (Vol. II.) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TURKEY (No. 2, 1903).

Copy presented, of further correspondence respecting the affairs of South Eastern Europe (reforms in the administration of the Vilayets of Salonica, Monastir, and Kossovo) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (CONTRACT FOR ACCELERATED MAIL SERVICE TO AND FROM IRELAND VIA CARLISLE, STRANRAER, AND LARNE).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 25th February; *Mr. Hayes Fisher*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 56.]

LAND REGISTRY (NEW BUILDINGS) ACT, 1900.

Account presented, showing the money issued from the Consolidated Fund, under the provisions of the Land Registry (New Buildings) Act, 1900, and of the Expenditure; the money expended and borrowed and the securities created under the said

Act, for the period ended the 31st March, 1902; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 57.]

ARMY (RECRUITING).

Copy presented, of Annual Report of the Inspector General of recruiting for 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (MEMORANDUM ON ESTIMATES).

Copy presented, of Memorandum of the Secretary of State relating to the Army Estimates of 1903–1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2941 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (INCOME AND EXPENDITURE).

Address for "Return of the Net Income and Expenditure of British India, under certain specified heads, for the eleven years from 1891–1892 to 1901–1902 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 93, of Session 1902)."—(*Sir Henry Fowler.*)

FOOD SUPPLIES (IMPORTED).

Return ordered, "showing annually, for each year since 1870, inclusive, in a summarised form, the imported quantities of (1) wheat, wheat meal, and flour; (2) meat, including animals for food; and (3) sugar retained for home consumption; and also the countries from which these supplies of food were derived."—(*Mr. D. A. Thomas.*)

SHANGHAI (CONSULAR JURISDICTION).

Address for "Return giving *modus vivendi* adopted with regard to Consular Jurisdiction in International Settlement at Shanghai."—(*Mr. Joseph Walton.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Local Government Act, 1888—Amendment of Section 26.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea, District): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that dissatisfaction has been expressed by Boards of Guardians in regard to the operation of Section 26 of the Local Government Act, 1888; and whether he will consider the propriety of bringing in a Bill to amend that section in such a way as to enable County Councils to make grants to Boards of Guardians towards the costs of officers of the Union, equal to the sums now in fact annnually expended by the Guardians on the salaries, remuneration, and superannuation allowances of such officers, and on drugs and medical appliances.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I have received representations from Boards of Guardians with respect to this matter. The Royal Commission on local taxation thought that the grant under the section referred to should be a fixed amount, though they recommended that it should be based on the expenditure of a later year than 1887–8. I am not at present in a position to promise legislation on the subject, but the recommendation will receive consideration in connection with any general measure relating to local taxation.

Pharmacy Act—Schedule A.

COLONEL LONG (Worcestershire, Evesham): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been drawn to the Report of the Departmental Committee of the Privy Council on Schedule A of The Pharmacy Act, 1868; and whether, in view of its effect on agriculture, the Government proposes to bring in a Bill to give effect to its recommendations.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) The Report is under consideration with a view to legislation at the earliest opportunity.

Road Construction at Letters, Ross-shire.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord Advocate, seeing that the people of Letters, in the parish of Lochbroom, Ross-shire, offer free labour in order to secure the construction of a road, will he say whether the Congested Districts Board are prepared to provide a grant in aid of the work.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) I can only refer the hon. Member to a letter written by the Secretary for Scotland to the hon. Member, dated 10th November, 1902. There has been no further communication on the subject since that date.

Scotch Education—Payment of Grants.

Sir JOHN LENG (Dundee): To ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to the arrears of the Scottish Education Department in paying the grant to technical and other evening schools, the grant in some cases for the session ending May 1902 either not having been paid or the amount earned intimated; and whether arrangements can be made whereby the managers of such schools can be promptly informed what grants they are entitled to, so that they may make arrangements for the session 1903–4.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) The grants have been paid to the managing bodies in all cases except twelve. Of these, two claims were only received last month; two have not yet been received although the Department has repeatedly asked the managers to forward them; three claims have been referred back to the managers and are awaiting their replies to the queries raised; two cases have just been completed, and it is hoped will be paid forthwith; two cases it has been found necessary to refer to His Majesty's Inspector; and one case under an Article of the Code requires special Treasury sanction. The financial year of continuation classes ends at 31st July, and, as all the claims are sent in to the Department at the same time, it is obviously impossible without a considerable increase of staff to overtake the necessary examination and calculation of these claims before the ensuing session begins. The Department has in a number of cases paid an instalment of grant to account, subject to rectification when the whole claims have been finally examined, and they propose to extend this procedure in respect of payments for the session 1902–3. The Department has had to deal with no less than 840 separate claims and, having regard to the fact of this being the first year of the new system, naturally some delays were caused by claims being submitted by managers while unfamiliar with the new conditions.

Working of Small Holdings Act in Scotland.

Captain SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture in reference to the Return, No. 407, session 2 of 1895, of proceedings under the Small Holdings Act, 1892, and to the application of the Act in Scotland subsequent to that Return, if he will say what further counties, if any, have, under Section 5 of the Act, made inquiry, by the appointment of a committee or otherwise; what further amount of land, if any, has been acquired under Section 3 of the Act, and in what parish or parishes the same is situate; and what further number of small holdings has been provided, of what acreage these holdings are, and under what terms, *i.e.*, sale or letting, they have been provided.

(*Answered by Mr. Hanbury.*) We are not at present in possession of information later than 1895, as to the proceedings of local authorities under the Small Holdings Act, 1892, but I have promised the hon. Member for South Molton a full Return of the subject,† and that Return is now in course of preparation. It will include the information desired by the hon. Member with regard to Scotland.

Labourers in the Dublin Ordnance Stores—Rate of Pay.

Mr. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether, in view of the fact that the labourers employed by the Dublin Ordnance Store Department receive 17s. per week, while the rate of pay for labourers in outside private firms is £1 1s. per week, he will consider the advisability of making the wages of labourers in the Ordnance Store similar to those paid at Haulbowline and other Government yards.

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† See (4) *Debates* cxv., 505.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The wages paid by the War Department at Haulbowline and other Naval stations are equivalent to those paid by the Admiralty. As regards the Army Ordnance Department in Dublin, I have nothing to add to the reply given to a question put by the hon. Member on this subject on the 10th December last.†

Telegraphic Service—Underground Wires.

SIR JOHN LENG: To ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience to merchants in Scotland from the interruption of telegraphic communication during the recent gales; and whether, seeing that this not only affects the Home service but also telegraphic communication with India and America, he will state how far the undergound wires have now been extended in the north of England; and whether the communication will be completed with Edinburgh and Glasgow during the present year.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Yes, Sir. I have received brief reports on the extent and character of the breakdown of telegraphic communication in the storm of Friday last. I shall have the pleasure of receiving a deputation from the Chambers of Commerce on the subject of the underground cables tomorrow, and I shall then have an opportunity of explaining the position in greater detail than is possible within the limits of an answer to a Question in this House.

Omagh Post Office—Insufficient Staff.

MR. MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid.): To ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been drawn to the delay caused in doing business in Omagh at the post office by want of sufficient counter assistants, especially on fair and market days; and will he make inquiries into the matter with a view to providing more assistance.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) No report showing that the counter staff at Omagh is inadequate has been received, but inquiry is being made on the subject, and the result shall be communicated to the hon. Member.

Foreign Office Questions in Parliament—Cost of Telegrams.

MR. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham): To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state the approximate cost of telegrams sent from and received by the Foreign Office during the year ended 31st December, 1902, to obtain and furnish information required for the purpose of Answers to Questions put by Members of this House.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) I am afraid the separation of the cost of the telegrams to which my hon. friend refers from the total charge for telegrams would be a rather laborious process. Though, no doubt, it would amount to a substantial sum, yet, if it were limited to telegrams required for the information of hon. Members at question time, it would be small compared to the total Vote.

China—Railway Construction by the Pekin Syndicate.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester): To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any, and if so what, steps have been taken by the Government in support of the application of the Pekin Syndicate for the grant of the promised concession of the right to construct the railway from the Syndicate's mines in Honan to the Yangtsze River at Tukon.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Pekin is in communication with the Agent of the Pekin Syndicate in China, and has made frequent representations to the Chinese Government in support of the Syndicate's application. Prince Ching informed Mr. Townley on the 21st ultimo that telegraphic instructions had been sent to the Director General of Railways to see the Agent of the Syndicate, and to negotiate in a friendly spirit.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxvi., 649.

Argentine Cattle Landed at Liverpool.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware that Argentine cattle landed at Liverpool on Tuesday or Wednesday, 24th or 25th ultimo; and will he state their number, and whether they were shipped before the restrictions preventing them from landing in this country were removed.

(*Answered by Mr. Hanbury.*) No Argentine cattle have as yet been landed at Liverpool since the withdrawal of the Order prohibiting importation from the Argentine. The fact that animals had been shipped before the revocation Order was passed would not, as I am advised, prevent their being landed here subsequently to the removal of the prohibition, provided that all the requirements of the Foreign Animals Orders were satisfied. One cargo comprising 133 cattle and 2 calves thus shipped was landed at Deptford on the 23rd ultimo, and it may be to this cargo that the Question of the hon. Member refers.

Teachers in Irish National Schools.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of first class teachers at present employed in Irish national schools with an average attendance of less than 50 pupils and the number of first class teachers at present employed in schools with an average of less than 70 pupils.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) There are 984 such teachers in schools with an average attendance of less than 50 pupils, and 626 in schools with an average attendance of between 50 and 70 pupils.

Land Purchase (Ireland) Return.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the promised legislation in relation to land tenure in Ireland, he will grant the Return relative to Land Purchase (Ireland) standing upon to-day's Notice Paper.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I have already stated that Returns are in preparation, and will be laid on the Table, containing information under a variety of heads on the subject of land purchase operations in Ireland. These Returns are necessarily statistical in form and will not give the names of the 74,000 tenant purchasers to whom advances have been made since the passing of the Irish Church Act of 1869.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Report on Army Recruiting.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the dates on which the General Return of the Army and the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting will be presented.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): As regards the General Return I have already explained to the House that its publication cannot be expected before April. The Recruiting Report will, I hope, be published by the end of this week.

The Reserve.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: In asking the Secretary of State for War whether he will grant the Return respecting Reservists which stands on the Paper, may I say I have received a letter from the right hon. Gentleman stating that certain portions of the Return cannot be given without undue labour. Will he grant it with those portions omitted?

*MR. BRODRICK: Yes, I will have it prepared in the amended form as soon as possible.

Army Officers.

*COLONEL WELBY (Taunton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will grant the Return standing on to-day's Paper relative to Army Officers (Removed, etc.).

MR. BRODRICK: This Return, if extended to ten years, would require a great amount of research. I can give my hon. friend the information he requires for two years, but this would not include officers called on to resign who are numbered amongst voluntary retirements.

Colonel WELBY: Can we have it before the debate takes place next Wednesday?

Mr. BRODRICK: I will do my best, but I am being asked to give a number of Returns at very short notice.

Ireland and the Volunteers.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the advisability of extending the Volunteer system to Ireland.

Mr. BRODRICK: I am afraid I must refer my hon. friend to the replies previously given on this subject by my right hon. friend the Prime Minister.

Mr. SLOAN: What was the effect of the answer?

No reply was returned.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): He is not a member of the Fourth Party.

Army Discharges – Certificates of Character.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether all defaulter sheets relating to troops serving in the South African War have yet been received by the War Office; and whether certificates of character can now be given to all soldiers of good conduct discharged from the Army.

Mr. BRODRICK: It would be impossible to answer this Question without calling for returns from all districts and units at home; and as no complaints on this subject are now being received it is probable that the men are duly receiving their certificates.

Hong Kong Defences.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the question of fortifying the hills in the new territory on the Kowloon side of Hong Kong has yet been considered by the Defence Committee; and will he say when the Committee last met.

Mr. BRODRICK: I have no information to add to that which I have already given the hon. Member on this subject in reply to previous Questions.†

Mr. WEIR: When did the Committee last meet?

Mr. BRODRICK: Three hours ago.

Transfers from the Militia to the Army.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the number of men who have joined the Regular Army from the Militia during the last year; and whether these men are counted as recruits to the Regular Army as well as to the Militia in compiling the present effective land forces of the Crown.

Mr. BRODRICK: 18,379 Militiamen joined the Regular Army in 1902. They are counted as recruits on entering the Militia, and as recruits on entering the Regular Army; on the latter occasion they are at once struck off the effective strength of the Militia.

Dingwall Barracks.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether provision will be made in the Estimates for the construction of barracks in the neighbourhood of Dingwall for the accommodation of the Ross-shire Militia.

Mr. BRODRICK: The reply is in the negative.

Mr. WEIR: It always is.

The Death of Lieutenant Boyle.

Sir J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether the record and evidence in the trial of a Boer named Celliers for killing Lieutenant

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† See (4) *Debates*, cv., 823.

Boyle, of the South African Constabulary, who had been taken prisoner at Wepener, will be sent home.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E., for Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN): I have no information on the subject, but Lord Milner will be asked if a report of the trial can be furnished.

Naval Gunnery.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been directed to the fact that at their recent prize-firing competitions H.M.S. "Empress of India" scored 11 hits for 69 rounds fired, and H.M.S. "Formidable" 1 for 27; and whether he can explain these results.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): As I stated in an answer to the hon. Member for Caithness in December last, the attention of the Admiralty was called to the unsatisfactory nature of the prize-firing in the "Empress of India." Attention has been called to the results on the "Formidable," which are also unsatisfactory, and special enquiry is being made into the circumstances in this case with a view to ascertaining the cause of the defective shooting, and whether it is in any degree attributable to defects in the gun sights.

Engineer Officers in the Navy.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, have all the effects been considered of the changes in designation of rank proposed by the new scheme dealing with the training and employment of officers, and stated to be designed to harmonise the position of Engineer Officers with the spirit of the future organisation. Will one effect of it be that the Chief Inspector of Machinery at Jamaica dockyard will on the 1st April next become an Engineer Rear Admiral while the Captain Superintendent of the dockyard remains a Captain; will the new Rear Admiral cease to be responsible to the Captain for the machinery of the ships, and cease to report thereon to him and to take orders thereon from the Captain. Will the same arrangement as at Jamaica be carried out at all other dockyards where the same conditions obtain; and were the admirals in command on the various stations informed or consulted upon the new scheme before its adoption.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The effects of the changes in designation of rank have been fully considered, and all the orders connected therewith will be shortly issued in the usual form of an Admiralty circular. When this circular is published it will be seen that no such contingency will arise as that which is anticipated in the Question. There is no Chief Inspector of Machinery at Jamaica, or at any foreign dockyard. There *was* a Chief Inspector of Machinery at Bermuda, but he has been succeeded by an Inspector of Machinery. The First Lord sent a copy of his Memorandum at the time of issue to all the admirals in command of foreign stations. There was no necessity to consult them on the new scheme before its adoption, as the Board of Admiralty, from the nature of its constitution, is fully competent to act on its own initiative.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Was the copy of the Memorandum sent without any suggestion or expectation of replies being received.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The Admiralty had the advantage of the opinions of a great many officers—flag officers and otherwise. I cannot add anything to my answer.

United States and the Newfoundland Fisheries.

* SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Convention between the United States and Newfoundland recently signed contains any fishery stipulations; and, if so, will he state their nature.

* THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (LORD CRANBORNE, Rochester): There are no fishery stipulations in the Convention, unless the

articles which give to United States fishing vessels the privilege of buying bait in Newfoundland waters, and provide for the disposal of the produce of Newfoundland fisheries in the United States, be considered in that light.

Labour Colonies in Holland.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the Government will procure the latest information as to the working of the labour colonies in Holland, and furnish the same to Members of both Houses.

*LORD CRANBORNE: A Report on the present state of these Colonies in Holland and elsewhere on the Continent will be called for, and in due course will be laid before Parliament.

British East Africa Protectorate.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any general report on the British East Africa Protectorate has been received by the Foreign Office from the Chief Commissioner of that Protectorate later than the report presented to the House on 14th August, 1901; and, if so, will he explain why it has not been presented.

*LORD CRANBORNE: No general Report on the East Africa Protectorate later than that presented to the House on August 14th, 1901, has been received from His Majesty's Commissioner by the Foreign Office. As the hon. Gentleman, however, is aware, a trade Report by Mr. Marsden, for the year ending March 31st 1902, was laid before Parliament in September last year. A general Report has been called for, and will be laid when received.

Aliens in British Prisons.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the return of foreigners in British prisons, which he is to present to the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, will include those who have adopted English or Scottish names and can speak English fluently; and how he proposes to obtain information as to their names and antecedents.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): If the persons referred to in the first paragraph of the Question were born abroad, the answer is in the affirmative. The country of birth is included in the particulars which are recorded as regards all prisoners.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask whether the police officers who are to give evidence before the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration are required to attend at the Home Office to rehearse their evidence before giving it to the Royal Commission.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: Not that I am aware.

London and North Western Railway—Re-housing of the Labouring Class.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can furnish information as to the legal proceedings taken by him against the London and North Western Railway in respect of their obligations to re-house persons of the labouring classes.

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: The proceedings which it was thought necessary to take against the London and North-Western Railway Company in order to obtain an authoritative settlement of the powers of the Secretary of State, which were disputed by the company, have involved considerable difficulties in arranging the preliminaries, and in the course of the negotiations the solicitor to the company died. I am now in active communication with the new solicitor, and matters are being pressed forward as rapidly as possible with a view to bringing the case to an early hearing.

Government Officials before the Commission on Alien Immigration.

MR. BULL (Hammersmith): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will explain why police officers who have given evidence before the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration were instructed to refrain from expressing any opinions, and that Mr. Herbert Evans, one of His Majesty's Assistant Inspectors of Factories, who also gave evidence, was allowed and even encouraged to express his opinions freely.

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: It has long been the rule, for obvious reasons, that the police should, in giving evidence before Commissions or otherwise, confine themselves to statements of facts. The same considerations do not apply with equal force to Inspectors of Factories, and in the case in point it was not thought necessary to curtail the full statement which Mr. Evans made to the Commission of the results of his experience.

Licensing Act—Internal Communication.

MR. DAVID MORGAN (Essex, Walthamstow): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can take steps, in the Finance Bill or otherwise, to define the term internal communication occurring in Section 10 (1) of the Licensing Act, 1902, so that it shall not apply to the self-contained premises of wine and spirit merchants holding off-licences and located in buildings in which other traders are carrying on their respective trades or business.

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: I have the point under consideration and am communicating with the Inland Revenue authorities, who, I understand, have interpreted the words of the statute in a sense which, whether right or wrong, does not, I believe, represent the intention of Parliament when passing the provision in question.

Smallpox in Staffordshire Potteries.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can state the number of cases of smallpox that have occurred in the Staffordshire Potteries during the present outbreak; what hospital accommodation has been provided for them: and if there has been any overcrowding of smallpox patients.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, W.): According to the information in my possession, there were, during the first two months of this year, fifty-nine cases of smallpox in the district referred to among a population of 262,500. The local authority for providing smallpox hospital accommodation are the North Staffordshire Joint Hospital Board. The Joint Board have only been recently constituted, but they have made temporary arrangements for accommodating smallpox cases and are treating the patients in some temporary iron pavilions. My attention has been called to statements in the local Press alleging overcrowding in the hospital, and I have directed one of the medical inspectors of the Department to visit the District and report on the subject.

North Sea Fisheries.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state the names of the vessels to be employed by Great Britain in the International Fisheries Investigation in the North Sea and their tonnage.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds Central): The vessels which will be employed by Great Britain in the International Fisheries Investigation are the S.S. "Huxley," 191 tons gross register, and the S.S. "Gold Seeker," 199 tons.

Avoch Channel, Ross-shire.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in accordance with the promise given last year, provision will be made in the Estimates for the scheme under which four lighted buoys and one lighted beacon are to be fixed for the purpose of marking the channel off Avoch, Ross-shire.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: In accordance with the promise given last year the scheme proposed by the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses for lighting the channel off Avoch, Ross-shire, is being considered in connection with the Estimates for the coming financial year.

National Food Supplies.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can grant the

Return relative to food supplies standing on to day's Notice Paper.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The answer to the Question is in the affirmative.

Ross-shire Roads.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state what progress has been made with the construction of the proposed road between the townships of Achna haird and Altandhu, Ross-shire.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The necessary preliminaries with regard to the construction of this road were completed in December, and the Congested Districts Board are informed that the construction of the road has been commenced by the contractor.

Scottish Fishery Cruiser "Garland."

MR WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, in view of the fact that the Scottish Fishery Board cruiser "Garland" has been sold, being too small and inefficient for scientific research, will he state what sum she realised; and will he state to what extent the Scottish Fishery Board will participate in the international scientific investigations in the North Sea, and what sum will be allocated to the Board for the purpose.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The "Garland" was sold for £550. The Fishery Board will participate in the international investigations to the extent of receiving one half of the whole amount available and superintend its expenditure.

Essex Education Grant.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he is aware that the county of Essex will have a deficit of sixpence in the pound, owing to delay in payment of grant, and a net rate of ninepence, which, added to the sixpence, comes out to fifteen pence in the pound; and whether he can take steps, by legislation or otherwise, to relieve the ratepayers of this impost.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): I have really nothing to add to my reply of Monday last to a similar Question addressed to me by the hon. Member for North Camberwell.† While not desiring either to dispute or to accept the figures given in the first part of the Question, I may say that I am aware of the existence of the difficulty; but the burden of this initial charge may be to a very large extent obviated by the arrangements which the Board of Education have made for the earlier payments of grants, and by the fact that a local authority may, if they desire, apply to the Local Government Board for permission to spread the charge over a period of years. It does not appear to be a matter to be dealt with by legislation.

Education Act.

MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he proposes to issue any regulations to the local education authorities, constituted by the Education Act, 1902, in reference to taking over the control and maintenance of public elementary schools, and to providing suitable accommodation in cases where the existing schools are not in good repair, or are not in a satisfactory condition, or are not suitable to the requirements of the district, or where the managers of such schools fail to comply with the requirements of the local education authority in these respects, prior to the date at which the schools should be taken over.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: The Board of Education will very readily assist local authorities if requested to do so, with any information, as to the procedure of the Board on the subjects in question, which any local authority may desire to possess. The Board do not desire to issue regulations on any matters which are properly within the discretion of the local authority. As regards the last part of the Question, the local education authority will not be in a position to make any requirements prior to the appointed day.

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† See page 1098.

Bournea Medical Officer.

Mr. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the requirement of the Local Government Board that the medical officer of a dispensary district should reside within it, the Local Government Board will take steps to secure that the medical officer for the Bournea district of the Roscrea Union shall comply with this requirement.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Wyndham, Dover): The regulations require the medical officer to reside within the district unless the Board, on exceptional grounds, dispense with this condition. The medical officer in question was permitted to reside outside, but adjacent to his district, because it contained no suitable house or lodgings. No complaint has been received of any hardship on the sick poor by this arrangement.

Irish Education Grant.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has yet come to any arrangement for the allocation of the equivalent grant due to elementary education in Ireland in consequence of the £1,300,000 voted to English schools under the Education Act of last session; and whether he will take steps to have this money granted immediately.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I expect shortly to make an announcement on this subject.

Gun Licences in Ireland—Case of William Maxwell.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that William Maxwell, Castleblaney, County Monaghan, has made several applications since 1899 for a gun licence and has been refused; and will he state on what grounds the licence is withheld.

Mr. WYNDHAM: Two applications were made. The resident magistrate is prepared to issue a licence to Maxwell under the Peace Preservation Acts, provided he obtains the necessary Inland Revenue licence, but this he has refused to do.

Limerick Artizans' Dwellings Loan.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can say when may the County Borough Council of Limerick expect to receive the loan of £3,000 sanctioned by the Irish Local Government Board and also by the Board of Works for the building of artizans' dwellings at Fredrick Street, Limerick.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Hayes Fisher, Fulham): During the negotiations for the loan a statement appeared in the press that the City Council of Limerick had struck a rate insufficient to meet the liabilities of the current year. The Board of Works thereupon requested the Council to furnish them with an explanation; and, when it proved unsatisfactory, declined to proceed with the loan. If the Council can submit information showing that the financial position of the city is now satisfactory, the Board will, of course, be ready to reconsider the question.

Telegraphic Communication with Scotland—Damage by the Storm.

Mr. PARKER SMITH (Lanarkshire, Partick): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been called to the breakdown of telegraphic and telephonic communication between England and Scotland in the storm of Friday last; and will he state for how long telegraphic communication was interrupted and delayed, and what steps he is taking to establish connection with Edinburgh and Glasgow by underground cables, or by other means not liable to interruption by the weather.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, Sir. I have received brief reports on the extent and character of the breakdown of telegraphic communication in the storm of Friday last. I shall have the pleasure of receiving a deputation from the Chambers of Commerce on the subject of the underground cables to-morrow, and I shall then have an opportunity of explaining the position in greater detail than is possible within the limits of an answer to a Question in this House.

Defences of Gibraltar.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, have His Majesty's Government now considered the Report of Captain Tizard, R.N., and Mr. Shield, dated 20th June 1902, on the proposal to construct a harbour and dock on the eastern side of Gibraltar; if so, what decision has been arrived at, and what steps is it intended to take to carry out that decision?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The report of Captain Tizard has been considered, but the Government do not think that the great expenditure which is involved would bring with it any adequate result from the point of view of Imperial defence.

In answer to a further Question by Mr. GIBSON BOWLES.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said: My hon. friend has no right to suppose that adequate security to Gibraltar would be secured by the harbour which he desires to see built.

Vaccination Act.

MR. COGHILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will say what course the Government propose to take on the expiration of the present Vaccination Act; and whether legislation will be proposed this session to make revaccination generally compulsory.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The President of the Local Government Board proposes to renew the existing Act for this year, and to defer any further legislation on the subject to a future session.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): Will the Act be renewed for only one year?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Without pledging myself, I think that that will be the most convenient course.

MR. COGHILL: Will the Act be renewed in the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is a question of procedure on which I should not like to pronounce an opinion now.

MR. COGHILL: Does the right hon. Gentleman know that there are serious outbreaks of smallpox in several large towns like Manchester and Liverpool?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I was not aware of it. Perhaps my hon. friend will put down any further Question?

Housing of the Working Classes.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when he proposes to introduce the Bill promised by the Government in relation to the Housing of the Working Classes.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid it would be impossible to give a precise day for the introduction of the Bill, which is in course of preparation, but I hope that my right hon. friend will be able to introduce it on an early day.

Taxation of Natives in South Africa.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, before any increase is sanctioned by the Crown in the rates of taxation levied upon natives in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, opportunity will be given for a discussion of the subject in this House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I could not give any pledge on the subject.

The Navy Estimates.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): When will the Navy Estimates be laid on the Table.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that these Estimates, with the statement of the First Lord, will be in the hands of hon. Members on Monday.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: When is it proposed to move Mr. Speaker out of the Chair on the Navy Estimates?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That depends on the length of the discussion on the Army Estimates.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Have the Army Estimates yet been circulated?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Not yet.

Business of the House.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: May I ask whether, in view of the fact that the Speaker left the Chair last night because there was no business before the House, the First Lord of the Treasury will so arrange the business as to prevent this waste of time in future.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must congratulate the House upon the well-earned leisure they have obtained by not discussing the Supplementary Estimates at the length to which we have unfortunately been accustomed to have them discussed in years past. I think it may result in an advantage which we might often have if we curtailed our discussions on less important matters—the time to deal with a subject in which I know the House feels a deep interest. I propose to-morrow to give the House a chance of discussing the Committee of Defence, and I shall put down a Resolution to enable that Question to be raised.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: If the right hon. Gentleman has any spare half-hours I have lots of things I can bring on.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I wish to make a personal explanation on the subject of the debate on the issue of a writ for Galway. The hon. Member for North Islington on that occasion read a telegram from me addressed to the electors of Galway; and instantly from recollection I challenged the accuracy of the hon. Member's statement, which was withdrawn. In vindication of my accuracy, I should like to read to the House the original cable message, which I have obtained, and this is the only communication I made to the electors of Galway. It was as follows:—

> "November 17, Baltimore. Irish America keenly watching election, and trust Galway will strike a blow for Ireland by the triumphant return of Lynch."

It will be seen that that is quite a different message from the one attributed to me by the hon. Member.

NEW BILLS.

MARKET GARDENERS' COMPENSATION BILL.

"To remove certain doubts as to the meaning of The Market Gardeners' Compensation Act, 1895," presented by Colonel Long; to be read a second time upon Wednesday 18th March, and to be printed. [Bill 72.]

COUNTY COUNCILS (BILLS IN PARLIAMENT) BILL.

"To amend The Local Government Act, 1888, by empowering County Councils to promote Bills in Parliament," presented by Mr. Walter Long; supported by Mr. Grant Lawson; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 71.]

MINISTRY OF COMMERCE BILL.

"To reform, co-ordinate, and define our Commercial Administration and to create a Ministry of Commerce," presented by Mr. Louis Sinclair; to be read a second time upon Wednesday 18th March, and to be printed. [Bill 73.]

SUPPLY [3rd MARCH].

Resolutions reported:—

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1902–3.

CLASS II.

1. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £3,700, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1903, for the salaries and expenses of the Department of His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies."

CLASS V.

2. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,016,000, be granted to His Majesty to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for sundry Colonial Services, including a Grant-in-Aid."

First Resolution agreed to.

Second Resolution read a second time.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said a financial issue of the utmost importance had been raised in the debate which took place on the previous day, by the explanations given on behalf of the Government. Grants-in-aid, though they might be familiar to some Members of the House, were altogether exceptional matters; they did not represent sums of money voted in the ordinary way to be expended by Imperial officials, and it was consequently the universal opinion of all who had studied finance that they should be jealously watched and greatly restricted. He had ventured to give evidence to that effect before the Committee on National Expenditure, and what he said was corroborated by Sir Edward Hamilton, who declared that the Treasury were fully alive to the importance of restricting grants-in-aid, he cordially agreed, he said, that they ought to be jealously criticised, because they were the means of withdrawing large sums from the control of Parliament. They were not subject to the Appropriation audit, and the Controller and Auditor General did not follow them out in the same sense as he did ordinary Votes. He was far from saying that grants-in-aid were always improper; on the contrary, he held that, in certain instances—notably that of the National Gallery—it was extremely convenient that money should be granted as an out and out gift not to be inquired into further, and that it should be left in the hands of the grantees to spend or save in a particular year as they thought fit. But still they ought, as Sir Edward Hamilton said, to be jealously restricted. Were they? In the year 1900–01 the total amount of the grants-in-aid was £1,600,000; last year it was £7,683,000, and in the current year they exceeded £12,000,000 sterling. Thus, instead of the grants-in-aid being restricted, they were being enormously exaggerated, and they had now reached a point when the House should most jealously watch any further increase of them. Having laid down the general principles which should apply to grants-in-aid, he now came to the consideration of this particular grant, which was for a sum of over £1,000,000 in aid of the local revenue of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony. It professed, too, to be supplementary to the original Estimate. In accordance with the financial practice of the country, the Vote was for money to come into course of payment during the current year, so that if at the end any surplus remained, it was automatically transferred to the Commissioners for the payment of the National Debt.

He understood that it would not be in order for him to move the reduction of the Vote by £1,000,000—although he would be able to prove that the withholding of that sum would not cause any public inconvenience. He wished to point out, however, that with respect to every Department of the public service, in spite of the enormously increased expenditure, the greatest laxity was observable nowadays in regard to all financial safeguards. The Sinking Fund had recently been raided, and altogether a sum of £32,000,000, double Mr. Pitt's revenue, now practically escaped the control of the House of Commons. This was, therefore, a very serious matter. As he had pointed out, the Vote should be to defray charges coming into course of payment during the current financial year, but on the preceding day it was admitted that it was not a grant-in-aid of the Transvaal at all, and that it was not to be expended this year. These were his two objections to the Vote. It was admitted, on behalf of the Government, that it was an Imperial grant for the maintenance of the South African police—a force raised while the war was going on—and that the sum could not be properly charged to the colonies, which did not require the services of that force. The men were, in fact, remnants of the war, and as the money was required to compensate them, now that their services were no longer required, the Vote was really a grant-in-aid to the Government; it was an Imperial and not in any sense a colonial charge.

Then, again, it sinned against the rule of the House that the money was to be spent in the course of the current year. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted that it would not be so spent, and that, if there were any balance unexpended at the end of the present financial year, it would not be surrendered but would be available for next year; although, when the whole transaction was completed, the unspent balance would then be handed over. But the right hon. Gentleman was entirely wrong when he suggested that there was any provision for surrender when the transaction was finally closed. There was no such provision in any Act of Parliament, or in any order of the House. Having shown, as he thought he had done, that this Vote was not really a grant-in-aid of the Transvaal, but that it was a grant-in-aid of war expenses incurred by the Government, and having further shown that it was not asked for in order to meet expenditure during the present financial year, but partly, at any rate, for expenses to be incurred during the succeeding financial year, it sinned against all sound financial canons which ought to influence the conduct of the House, and he ventured to express a hope that the Government would not persist in pressing the Vote. He suggested, on the contrary, that they should withdraw £1,000,000 of it, and be content with the remaining £16,000. The public service would not in the least suffer by their so doing, as, if the money were required for next year, it could easily be included in the Estimates for that year. It was pretty clear that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had already got the million in his pocket, or he would not allow the Government to put forward that Supplementary Estimate. What would happen if the Vote were withdrawn? The money would go in reduction of the National Debt, and that was precisely where it ought to go. He appealed to the Government, in deference to the feeling displayed by hon. Members on the Government Benches on the preceding night in regard to that Vote, to withdraw it, as he, for one, did not wish that they should have again to go into the Lobby against the Ministers.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): As the hon. Member says he is anxious to support the Government, I hope, when he has heard the statement I have to make he will find himself at liberty to do so. I was rather anxious to speak before him, because, in answering a question put to me yesterday, I was led into making a statement which was not quite correct—a statement to which he has just alluded—and I desired that he should be in possession of my correction before he spoke. I think it will be for the convenience of the House if I recapitulate briefly the circumstances out of which this Vote arose. Let me say first that no one on these Benches will dispute the views expressed by the Treasury witnesses before the National Expenditure Committee, that grants-in-aid should be carefully watched and should not be too readily resorted to. What are the circumstances of this particular grant-in-aid, which have led the Government to think it justifiable and necessary? During the progress of the war in South Africa, we decided to raise a force of constabulary for service in the new colonies. When the sums to be raised were under discussion, Lord Milner was of opinion that the number of men required for policing the colonies would be 6,000 men. Lord Roberts, on the other hand, held as strongly that as many as 10,000 men would be required; and after some discussion it was finally agreed that 10,000 should be raised, 4,000 of whom might be employed, if necessary, in relieving the military forces which would otherwise have to be sent out, on the understanding that no expense for these 4,000 men would fall on the colonies. The cost of these 4,000 men has been, from time to time, provided for by sums of money voted by this House. To make myself perfectly clear, I had better just say that the House will understand that the first 6,000 men were regarded as the constabulary of the colonies and are to be charged on the funds of these colonies. What we are dealing with is the 4,000 men raised in excess of the requirements of the ordinary police. The original Estimates of this year contained provision for the payment of these 4,000 men up to the close of the Transvaal financial year, in June. Then arose the questions whether it was necessary to maintain that force longer, how quickly such part of it as was not required for policing purposes could be dispensed with, and who was to bear the expenditure incurred until the men were dispersed. After full communication with Lord Milner, the Government were satisfied that these 4,000 men would not be required as part of the permanent police force, and in accordance with the conditions on which they were raised, it was agreed to ask Parliament for the necessary money to pay their expense. The necessary information was not in our hands when the original Estimates were prepared, and therefore we were not able to make full provision for the cost of these men at the time. But when the Budget was before the House, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer explained that he had to provide for a further expenditure of £750,000 not yet voted, on account of these constabulary, and in order to pay that expense up to 31st March next. That was the position at the time the Budget was passed. The £750,000 which was budgeted for by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer is part of the £1,000,000 the Committee is now asked to vote. It has become apparent that it will not be possible to disband the whole of these 4,000 men before the 31st of this month, the close of the financial year. Very well, then, some arrangement had to be come to as to how much of the cost would remain open into the next financial year, in the event of the whole 4,000 men not being meantime disbanded. The Government had already admitted that these 4,000 men, having been raised, as Lord Milner pointed out, not for colonial police purposes, but for Imperial reasons, were a proper Imperial charge, and thus we ought not to throw on the colonies any expense in connection with them.

Then the question arose what exactly the expenditure would be, and how it would be provided. Lord Milner's decision was that the expenditure, in addition to the £750,000 included in last year's Budget, would amount to at least £350,000 more, making a total of £1,100,000. His Majesty's Government did not accept these figures, and some correspondence ensued as to exactly what the cost of these 4,000 men, or so many of them as remained, would be, what economies could be effected, and how the men could be more speedily got rid of. Finally Lord Milner offered, on behalf of the colonies, that if we would vote a lump sum of £1,000,000, payable before the 1st April, he would take that lump sum in discharge of all liabilities. It was the opinion of Lord Milner that the £1,000,000 would not cover the whole expense of the force, but in order to obtain an immediate settlement between the Colonial Treasury and the Imperial Government, he accepted the offer which His Majesty's Government made. This is the only point on which I was inaccurate yesterday. It arose out of a question of the Member for Lambeth. This payment of £1,000,000, inclusive of the £750,000 budgeted for by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer—the major portion of which has been already expended by the colonies—is a grant-in-aid of the colonial revenue in full discharge of all liabilities which would have fallen on His Majesty's Government in respect of the 4,000 men, and is not subject to the surrender of any balance if there be one.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that this £750,000, although budgeted for by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, has never yet been voted, that there has been no Ways and Means for it, that it was not provided for in the Supplementary Estimates of last November, and that it was left to February of this year to make up the Vote required?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I think my hon. friend correctly understands what I said. It was not included in the original Estimates of the year, because these were prepared before the figures were arrived at; and it was not on the Supplementary Estimates in November last, because the adjustment of liability had also not then been arrived at. This £750,000 is now included in the £1,000,000, and this £1,000,000 was offered by His Majesty's Government as a cash payment in discharge of all liabilities, and was accepted as such by Lord Milner, so that even if his anticipations were fulfilled, and this sum should not be sufficient to meet the full charges in favour of these men, who have been discharged as rapidly as possible, there still would be no further claim upon us. The one mistake I made yesterday was in respect to the possibility of the surrender of the balance. I ought to have made myself acquainted with the whole of the correspondence, but the House will appreciate the difficulty under which I am working in this matter. I had not seen the closing letters of the correspondence, and was not then informed of the nature of the bargain come to, and that it was a final and definite settlement of all liabilities that had accrued or might accrue. Therefore no additional Vote would be asked for even if the expenses of maintaining these 4,000 men are exceeded, or, what is much less probable, of a saving being made. If the House understands the position as I have now explained it, they will see that a large portion of the speech of my hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn, is not applicable to the situation I have expounded. My hon. friend complains that we were providing for a grant-in-aid in this way, for an expenditure that would only become due by us next year. That is not so. In essence, instead of this bargain being left open till next year, a cash payment would be made this year in settlement of all our liabilities. I hope that my hon. friend will now feel assured that no financial irregularities are being committed, and that he will find it in his power, as he always does, to support the Government on the present occasion.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said that the right hon. Gentleman had thrown a very different complexion on this matter from that presented when they were discussing it in Committee of Supply. He was quite sure that nobody blamed the right hon. Gentleman for not being then in possession of all the facts. The right hon. Gentleman, in addition to his labours as Postmaster General, was very ably carrying on the work of the Colonial Secretary, and it was not his business to know either the Colonial Office or the Treasury point of view. But there was a representative of the Treasury in the House on the previous day, and he must say that in the whole course of his Parliamentary life, now extending over many years, he had never known of a question discussed when the Member responsible for the Department concerned was present, and when that Member did not speak on a question regarding his Department, but allowed the Committee to get into a fog without affording any light or leading on it. They acquitted the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster-General, but they did not acquit the Secretary to the Treasury for not putting the Committee in the possession of the most elementary information. Apart from the Secretary to the Treasury, he had listened with care and interest to what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman, and his explanation in regard to the policy of the Government was quite clear. There were a certain number of constabulary which the War Office thought ought to be kept in excess of those approved by Lord Milner, and the Government, in their discretion, disagreeing with Lord Milner, said that 4,000 of the constabulary were to be kept at the expense of the Imperial Government. The question before the House that afternoon was not that of bargaining with Lord Milner, but of a grant to the War Office for the services of these 4,000 men. Now they were told that the Government had made a speculation on the matter. The Government thought that £750,000 was enough, while the Transvaal Government thought it should be rather more, and that if the Government gave them £1,000,000 they might make a profit out of it, and that if so that would be to their advantage; if they made a loss they would have to stand the racket. He did not think that was the basis upon which their financial position ought to be put.

Apart from the question of the laxity to which the hon. Member for King's Lynn had referred, it did not seem to most Members of the House that they ought to lose the present very slight control which they exercised over the different Government Departments. Under the Vote as it was presented to the Committee this afternoon, their control had entirely disappeared, and, as far as he was concerned, their position had not been improved from a financial point of view by the statement which had been made. As the hon. Member for King's Lynn had pointed out, although this Vote was called a grant-in-aid to the Transvaal, really the Transvaal had nothing to do with it. At all events, it was entirely outside and different to any other grant-in-aid which this House had been asked to consent to, and he did not think it was to the advantage of their financial position that such a Vote should be put practically out of the power of the Committee to express any opinion in regard to it. He did not think that in a matter representing such a large sum, upon which there had already been two or three miscalculations, it was quite right that they should make a gamble. It was pointed out by the hon. Member for Oldham that a great deal might legitimately be said in favour of giving these men bonuses, or inducing them to leave at an earlier period. If they were to vote this £1,000,000, was it not possible that the Transvaal Government might carry out some such policy as that, and make £200,000 or £300,000 out of money which was intended to relieve the military forces? On the ground that the House should not part with its financial control, and because he was dissatisfied with the information, he should certainly support the proposal which had been made.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. HAYES FISHER, Fulham) said he could not allow the hon. Member for Poplar to say that he had neglected his duty either to the Treasury or to the House of Commons. It had been said that he had not made the best bargain for the taxpayers of the country. He had watched these proceedings throughout the winter, and his very last act, which was negotiated by cablegram, was to tell Lord Milner that he considered that £98,000 ought to come off his demands. He went most carefully into the figures, and he did not accept the original demand which was made upon the Treasury, but he had reduced it by £98,000. He was convinced that, taking all things into consideration, they had made a good bargain for themselves. His right hon. friend the Postmaster General was representing, under very great difficulties, the Colonial Office in addition to his other office, and he was in charge of this Vote. He supposed that his right hon. friend had been properly briefed in regard to the Vote, and he listened to his case, and in the whole of his original speech he could find no fault whatever. He believed his right hon. friend accurately stated the case, and it was only in the course of the examination by questions that he afterwards discovered that his right hon. friend had a different view from his own as to the result of the negotiations between the Colonial Office and Lord Milner on the one hand and the Treasury on the other. His right hon. friend was a distinguished financial authority and a member of the Cabinet, and it was just possible that, at the last moment, a modification of the arrangement might have been made at the Colonial Office. However, he ventured to tell the Postmaster General that his view was not correct, and that what had happened was that a bargain had been struck between the Treasury and the Colonial Office, and that an examination of the documents would prove this and show that if any economies were made in South Africa they would not accrue to the benefit of the British Exchequer. He told his right hon. friend that after looking at the documents he would probably find that his interpretation was the right one, and that it was a bargain; and if that were so they could put it all right on Report. Had there been no Report stage, he should have felt bound to inform the House, but the advantage of a Report stage was that those in charge of Departments could go back and, after obtaining official knowledge, give it to the House so as to enable hon. Members to form a more correct estimate of the facts. That was his explanation. He never wished to deceive the House, and he wished to give hon. Members all the information in his power.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.) wished to know how the expenditure out of this grant was to become subject to the audit of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.) said he thought this discussion had been a satisfactory one. The Postmaster General, in the explanation he had just placed before the House, acknowledged that they were left under a false or mistaken impression. He thought the Committee was indebted to the Postmaster General for the clear statement he had made with regard to a transaction which unquestionably did require explanation. and the House might congratulate itself that this discussion would be attended with satisfactory results. The House should uphold with the greatest possible care those sound canons of finance upon which the whole financial system of the country and our financial credit must, under all circumstances, depend.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said in this matter the House had been treated to a rare exhibition of political morality. The House had voted under a misapprehension owing to a right hon. Gentleman a Member of the Cabinet having quite unconsciously fallen into an error, and the hon. Gentleman who was the Secretary to the Treasury, who was bound to give his best abilities to the Treasury, was aware of the error and did not correct it. It was scarcely respectful to the House to pass a Vote in this manner and compel them to correct it on Report. The Postmaster General had been burdened with a duty which did not properly belong to him, and could not be expected not to fall into an error, but it was the bounden duty of anyone who undertook a public duty to give all his time to that duty, and the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury should have attended to his Treasury duties instead of the business of his public companies. Only recently, on the hon. Gentleman's re-appointment as a director of one company in which he was interested, he promised to give his whole time to the company.

*MR. SPEAKER pointed out that, although the hon. Member's remarks might be legitimate on another occasion, they were certainly not on this.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he would certainly not proceed further to-day after Mr. Speaker's ruling, but he would renew his attack on another occasion

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 163; Noes, 120. (Division List No. 15.)

AYES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Campbell, Rt Hn J A (*Glasg.*)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles C. (*Antrim, S.*)
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (*St. Albans*
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore, Hon G R C Ormsby-(*Salop*
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robt. Wm.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Rt Hn H (*Somers't, E*)
Hope, J. F. (*Sheff., B'tside*)
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Johnstone, Heywood
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (*Salop*
Kimber, Henry

Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawson, John Grant
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, Rt. Hon. Jas. (*Kent*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*)
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, John Throgmort'n
Mitchell, William
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (*Stalybridge*
Ridley, S. Forde (*Bethnal Green*
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Sackville, Sir S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks*
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G. (*Oxf'd Univ.*
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H. (*Sheffield*
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (*Taunton*
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (*Notts.*
Whiteley, H. (*Ashton und. Lyne*
Williams, Rt Hn J. Powell- (*Birm*
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allan, Sir William (*Gateshead*)
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (*Lanark*)
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Davies, M. Vaughan- (*Cardigan*
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duffy, William J.
Edwards, Frank
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*
Ffrench, Peter
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David B. (*Swansea*)
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Joyce, Michael
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, South*)
O'Brien, James F. X. (*Cork*)
O'Brien, Kendal (*Tipper'ry Mid*
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Connor, James (*Wicklow W.*
O'Donnell, T. (*Kerry, W.*)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (*Mayo, N.*)
O'Kelly, James (*Roscommon, N*
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Charles M. (*Durham*
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (*Waterford*
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Rigg, Richard
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (*Northants*
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glamorgan, E.*)
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (*Barnsley*)
Warner Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*)
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (*Norfolk*)
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whiteley, George (*York, W.R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Wilson, John (*Durham, Mid.*)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (*Huddersf'd*

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Joseph Leese and Mr. Charles Hobhouse.

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATE, 1902-3.

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £100, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for Expenditure in excess of that provided for in the original Army Estimates for the year for the Pay, etc., of the Army."

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said that he understood the Government to say yesterday that the expenditure in the present financial year in connection with the Somaliland Expedition would be about £250,000. There was often a great difference between the amount coming into course of payment in the financial year and the amount known to the Government to have been actually expended. He therefore desired to ask whether the Government had formed any idea of the amount of expenditure on Somaliland incurred in the present financial year, but which would not come into course of payment until next year. From information he had received, he imagined the Government must know that the expenditure already greatly exceeded the £250,000 referred to yesterday.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford) said that when they were dealing with the Indian Government in the matter of supplying troops and incurred expenditure, it was rather difficult, as the right hon. Baronet had suggested, to frame an accurate estimate, but the general estimate for the expedition, on the basis that it would last not longer than four months, was between £500,000 and £600,000. About £250,000 would become payable before 31st March, but some expenditure had no doubt been incurred which would appear in the Estimates to be circulated to-morrow.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) understood that £75,000 had already been paid in connection with the expedition, and that a further £185,000 would be expended before 31st March, and that in the estimates of money to be expended after 31st March would appear a further sum of about £500,000.

MR. BRODRICK: £250,000.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said that that would not make up the original estimate of £500,000 or £600,000.

MR. BRODRICK pointed out that the first estimate was £250,000, and there was a previous sum of £250,000 taken by the Foreign Office which did not come into this account, but would appear in the Estimates to be presented to-morrow. Those two items made up the £500,000.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) supposed that if the operation lasted longer than four months the amount required would largely exceed the estimated £500,000 or £600,000.

MR. BRODRICK: If the expedition lasts for a longer period a further sum will be required, but we have no reason to expect that it will last considerably longer.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty), referred to the apppropriations in aid, consisting of proceeds of sale of cast and other animals, supplies and stores, and asked whether the sales had been by public auction or by private treaty.

Resolution agreed to.

NAVAL RESERVE FORCES

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.), in asking leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Law relating to the Naval Reserve Forces, said: The Bill is the result of the deliberations of the Committee presided over by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Berwick, and its objects are two-fold. First, to introduce a new principle into the practice of the enlistment of men for the Royal Navy proper, and secondly, to create a new reserve of men of which we have not yet had the advantage. The Committee which considered this question and on whose recommendations, the Bill was based, was a very strong Committee, composed of naval officers, civil officials, and civilians interested in the subject, and the Bill will have the advantage of representing the views of over 100 Members of this House who were the signatories of a memorial in favour of the objects which the Bill is intended to carry out.

The Bill has three parts. The first part extends the power of employing non-continuous rating in the Navy; that is to say, it gives power to enter men in the Navy under an engagement to serve for a period not exceeding twelve years on the condition that after a given period of service in the Royal Navy they shall be liable to serve for the remainder of the term of their engagement in the Royal Fleet Reserve. The second part, with which I am sure all hon. Members will agree, enables us to remove the limit which at present exists to the numbers of the Royal Naval Reserve and Royal Fleet Reserve. We are now limited to 30,000 in the Royal Naval Reserve, and 15,000 in Class B of the Royal Fleet Reserve. As we have now nearly reached the limit in the case of the Royal Naval Reserve we ask leave to extend the limit. The third part of the Bill enables us to enrol Royal Naval Volunteers to serve as blue-jackets, and also Royal Marine Volunteers in connection with the corps of Royal Marines. The latter will be enrolled under the Volunteer Act of 1863, with this difference, that the Admiralty will, for all the purposes of this Act, take the place of the Secretary of State.

There is only one other matter of principle to which I need refer, but it is a very important one. In pursuance of the unanimous recommendation of the Committee, the Bill proposes that Volunteers enrolled under this Act shall be liable for service in time of war in any part of the world.

If the House permits the First Reading to be taken now, the Bill will, I hope, be printed to-night and circulated immediately. It is important that the Bill should pass through its stages as soon as possible, in view of the fact that there are large Committees throughout the United Kingdom, ready to take advantage of the provisions of the measure and enlist Volunteers, provided the House of Commons think fit to sanction its passage.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked whether the proposed increase of the limit with regard to the Royal Naval Reserve was indefinite, and whether the Bill would have any financial effect rendering an Estimate necessary.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said the limit in each case would be regulated by the Vote of the House of Commons. It was not proposed to fix an arbitrary limit, but one which could be altered by the House in every annual Vote. An estimate had been made of the financial effect of the Bill, provided the anticipations of the Admiralty as to the number of men they were likely to raise during the year were realised. He would be happy to place the estimate before the House.

"Bill to provide for the Constitution of a Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, and a Force of Royal Marine Volunteers, and otherwise amend the Law relating to His Majesty's Naval Forces;" ordered to be brought in by Mr Arnold-Forster and Mr. Pretyman.

NAVAL FORCES BILL.

"To provide for the Constitution of a Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, and a Force of Royal Marine Volunteers, and otherwise amend the Law relating to His Majesty's Naval Forces," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 74.]

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I think there is no need for me to bespeak the favourable consideration of the House for the measure which I now ask leave to introduce, and I feel sure that the House has always given me so much indulgence personally that I do not need to ask for that. Not only has popular opinion been for a long time at one in Scotland that the time has come for a measure dealing with the amendment of the licensing laws, but, as hon. Members are well aware, during the past few years there has been a most painstaking investigation by a Royal Commission, which has presented voluminous reports with which hon. Members are familiar owing to the discussions in this House last year. More than that, there has also been the

English Act of last session. That I may speak of now, not merely as a legislative effort, but as an Act which has actually been proved by its working. Short though the time has been, and premature as it probably would be to express an opinion as to its eventual work, yet I believe I am saying what is in accordance with the experience of many, that the expectations founded upon that Act have been more than fulfilled, and that even at this very early period great substantial advantages have been reaped from the working of that statute. That being so, it will certainly not excite surprise in the House if I say that we have begun matters in the Bill I now ask leave to introduce by practically incorporating the English Act of last session, incorporating it, of course, so far as that Act is adaptable to Scotland.

Hon. Members will perhaps remember that the Act of last session is divided into three parts, which are entitled The Amendment of the Law as to Drunkenness, The Amendment of the Licensing Laws, and The Registration of Clubs. So far as the first part is concerned, practically we have incorporated the whole of it, with the exception of one provision dealing with the protection of wives or husbands. We have not incorporated that, not because we are not in sympathy with the proposal, but because in the present state of the law in Scotland it would be practically impossible to incorporate it, and there would have to be further alterations in the summary jurisdiction law before we could possibly incorporate that section of the English Act as it stands. But we have not stopped there, because we have, besides the sections we have taken from the English Act, introduced several other provisions founded on what I may call our own Scottish experience. The Borough Police Act of 1892 was, as Scottish Members will remember, a very long and carefully-considered measure, and a measure of which we have had due experience as to its working. There are several provisions in that Act with reference to the law as to drunkenness, and we propose to make them part of the general law, and therefore, of course, applicable to all parts of Scotland, and not only to the boroughs to which the Act applied. We also propose to meet an abuse brought to light in the course of a decision as to which there is a very strong feeling in Scotland, and which is connected with that well-known person, the *bonâ fide* traveller. There was a decision in Scotland in which it was held that the *bonâ fide* traveller might give drink to all and sundry although they were not *bonâ fide* travellers at all. That we intend to strike at, and we propose to remedy it by confining the *bonâ fide* traveller's drinking to himself.

We also propose to introduce another provision, which, I think, will commend itself to the House. Undoubtedly there has been great abuse in connection with the freedom which grocers have of sending liquor into the country by means of travelling vans. I need scarcely say we do not propose to alter the law in the way some people would like to see it altered. We do not propose to touch the question of grocers' licences, but we propose to make some very stringent regulations as to the conditions under which grocers are to be allowed to send out liquor to the country in these travelling vans. Practically it amounts to this—that no van is to be allowed to carry liquor which is not entered in a pass-book, and for which, on inquiry being made, it can be shown that a regular order was given. Persons in the country who choose to order liquor from grocers in the ordinary way are entitled to have it delivered; but I think the provision will effectually check a thing which is too common of grocers' vans being really travelling public-houses. That ends the part of the Bill which is equivalent to Part 1 of the English Act. The second part of the English Act is entitled the Amendment of the Licensing Laws, and we have practically adopted nearly the whole of that part of the Act except a few sections technical in their character and not applicable to the particular circumstances of Scotland—not applicable, not on their merits, but because they would involve a form of procedure which is not germane to Scottish law. The practical result of that, among other things, will be to give the licensing authority complete control over structural premises which it had not before; and, besides that, in this Amendment of the Licensing Law we are adding a provision which I think is not only good in itself, but which is very much needed in the present state of custom in Scotland.

We are adding a very liberal provision as to the power of the licensing authority to pass by-laws dealing with various things connected with the selling of liquor, and these by-laws will, of course, have to be confirmed by a central authority, namely, the Secretary for Scotland, before assuming the power of law. This is particularly necessary in Scotland, because in the last few years there has crept in a practice, although I am sure it was well meant, but which seems, in my humble judgment, to be illegal and, I think, to be deprecated, that is, that when magistrates in towns wish public houses to be closed, for instance, on New Year's Day—a very commendable wish—and not having power of law to say so, they issue through the Chief Constable what they euphemistically term a recommendation, and any publican who does not say that he will be glad to conform to such a regulation refuses with the halter round his neck, and in the belief that his licence will be refused. That is quite wrong and illegal, because magistrates are bound to give a judicial determination as to whether a licence is wanted or not, and they have no power to act on a recommendation not sanctioned by law. But under a system of by-laws it would be perfectly possible for magistrates to pass a by-law that public-houses should be closed on New Year's Day; and assuming it received confirmation, which in that particular case I assume it would, then the whole thing would be done properly and above-board, and there would not be the present system of illegal recommendations. That exhausts what is equivalent to Part 2 of the English Act.

Part 3 of the English Act deals with clubs. In the matter of clubs I remember being struck at the time of the discussion on the English Bill which I had an opportunity of hearing, to find that the Scottish and English Bills could not be altogether the same. The truth is that the existence of the *bonâ-fide* working men's club is much more widespread in England than in Scotland. I do not say that it does not exist in Scotland, but it is not very common. On the other hand, the difficulty connected with the bogus club is much more common in Scotland than in England, and accordingly we have not taken precisely the same remedy as has been taken in England. Our remedy, if anything, is rather more stringent than the remedy in the English Act. We proceed, of course, by way of registration; and we make the selling of liquor in any unregistered club an offence, as it is in England. But we proceed rather differently in the matter of registration. We make it a judicial matter, not a discretionary matter. That is to say, any club is to be entitled to be registered; it is not to be like granting a licence to a public house, where the magistrates can refuse or not. But in order to be entitled to registration, the club must be bound by certain conditions, and the sheriff is to be the judge as to whether these conditions have been complied with or not. The conditions impose no burden whatever on any *bonâ fide* club, whatever the social scale of that club may be, but they all come to the same end, namely to secure that the club is a genuine club, and not a mere drinking shop where liquor is sold under the pretext of a club. There is to be no election of members without a proper period—a certain number of days during which the names are posted on the walls of the club-house. In fact, it is to be in complete contradistinction of a case in which I was engaged for the Excise authorities—it was the last thing I did in Scotland before I came up to this House—in which, although no doubt the forms of election were duly gone through, we discovered in the course of cross-examination that the man who proposed far more people than anybody else was the waiter. That exhausts that portion of the subject.

I may now say in a word that we have embodied the English Bill, and we have made certain additions to it to meet our own requirements. But we have not stopped there. So far I have trodden completely on ground which was common to England. We have thought it better in the interests of what we believe to be public opinion in Scotland to go somewhat farther and to grapple with the question of the licensing authority itself. May I remind the House that, in Scotland, although no doubt the subject has always been attended with considerable difficulty, we may congratulate ourselves that we have not had so many difficulties as they have had in England. We have never had any case of Sharpe *v.* Wakefield in Scotland, for the simple reason that we never doubted the power of the law. But may I say also that I do not think we could express in any better words, if as good, what we consider to be the law than the words in which the Lord Chancellor expressed the judgment in the case of Sharpe *v.* Wakefield as to the way in which the discretion of the licensing authority should be exercised. I do not repeat it to the House. The House will remember that it was repeated a few days ago in answer to a question which was put. But there has been a feeling in Scotland that there was something still to be said upon the constitution of the licensing courts, because in truth the constitution of the licensing authority of first instance has been inconsistent, and the constitution of the Appeal Court of the licensing authority has been unpractical and unworkable.

Just let me remind the House—and perhaps I may be listened to by some who are not Scotch Members—what the Scotch system is at present. In all Royal burghs the licensing authority of first instance are the magistrates of the burgh. The appeal from those magistrates is to the County Justices sitting in Quarter Sessions. In the counties the licensing authority is practically the same as in England, that is to say, it is the Justices sitting in Petty Sessions, and with an appeal to the Justices sitting in Quarter Sessions. I think that bears out what I said that the court of first instance in its constitution is inconsistent, because in the burghs you have a body that is purely elective, while in the counties you have a body that is purely non-elective. There is a good deal to be said for both, but there is no particular reason why it should be different in counties and in burghs. Then the Appeal Court, as I have said, is unpractical and unworkable, but not always. Those hon. Members who come from Lanarkshire, of whom there are many here, will remember, especially in recent years, the extraordinary scenes — they can be called nothing else—at the Appeal Court of the Justices in Quarter Sessions, where so many attended that they had practically almost to stand in the street, and the numbers were such as to make any judicial examination of the matter practically impossible, complicated as it was by the provision of the statute which declares that only the votes of those present shall be counted.

Besides that, there is another curious anomaly which everyone felt ought to be done away with. I have mentioned that the Appeal Court in the Royal burghs are the magistrates. The Royal burghs are those which enjoy a charter from the King, but no Royal burghs have been created for many years, and practically, the fact of the matter is that all those Royal burghs are very old creations indeed. On the other hand, the Scotch Burgh system, under what is known as the Burgh Police Act, has grown and flourished, and the whole of Scotland, as everybody knows, is dotted over with burghs, many of which have grown to a very large size and taken a great part in the life of the country. They have no licensing authority, and accordingly you come to the extraordinary result that, for instance, the burgh of Culross, with a population of 348, has a licensing authority, whereas the police burgh of Govan, with a population of 82,000, has not. I think everyone will agree that that state of matters should not continue, and that really the distinction between Royal and other burghs, which is a purely historical one, ought to be done away with in a practical matter of this kind. Of course, it is quite obvious you must go by some population limit, and whenever you come to a population limit obviously your line must be an arbitrary one. I do not claim that the figure I am going to say has any divine institution, but we have taken what we believe to be, in the whole circumstances of the case, the best figure we could take. We have taken the figure of 7,000. It is not a new limit. It is the figure already under the provisions of the Local Government Act, for instance, by which no burgh under 7,000 population can have a separate police force. It is the limit for the exercise of the Contagious Diseases Act, and I think it is also mentioned in some other provisions. At any rate it is a familiar figure. We propose, therefore, that for the future, burghs which are under 7,000 population are simply to be treated as parts of the counties to which they belong. On the other hand, all burghs above the 7,000 limit are still to have the burgh legislation. [AN HON. MEMBER: What about Royal burghs?] We take away the powers of some of them in this matter. I think that no doubt some of them may not like this, but, on the other hand, I cannot see that a burgh with a population of 328 has any right to have a separate licensing authority, and if you are going in the one direction, I think you must go in the other.

We propose to give to the County Councils a power to divide counties, if they choose, into districts. I may mention this. Of course under the present law they have practically divided the counties into districts. Though a Justice of the Peace is for the whole county, still, as a matter of fact, counties have been pracitcally divided into districts for the purpose of holding courts. It is only a little matter of convenience, for I take it to be a legal right that any Justice of the Peace may, if he chooses, go to any court in the county. We only impose one limitation in connection with the division of a county into districts, namely, that they must take either one, or more than one, of the local government districts. The local government districts, as hon. Members who are familiar with Scotch legislation know, are districts under the 1889 Act, and are for the various purposes of the public health authority and the road authority. They may either take one of these districts, or, if they choose, they may make a licensing district of an aggregate of more than one district, but they are not to take other burghs. That is a consideration that will appeal to the House. There is nothing more troublesome than having different demarcation lines, and it is far better, if they are to divide, that they should take the existing divisions, which are pretty well known. Well, the county having been divided into districts, or left undivided as the County Council chooses, we propose that the licensing authority should consist of one-third of County Councillors and two-thirds of Justices. We propose that the actual numbers shall vary in size. Here of course we have to take the population limit. We propose to divide the possibilities into four divisions—under 25,000; between 25,000 and 50,000; between 50,000 and 100,000; and above 100,000, and the numbers appropriated to these respectively will be nine, twelve, fifteen and eighteen, in each case, of course, one-third being County Councillors and two-thirds Justices. The Appeal Court we propose to constitute in the same way as the court of first instance. That no doubt may first of all seem a curious proposal, but really in this matter I do not know to whom else we could go. The difference we propose to make in the Appeal Court from the court of first instance is to slightly increase the size, that is to say, we propose to add two more County Councillors and four more Justices, making the Appeal Court six more than the maximum court of whatever districts they are. Of course there will be only one appeal of the county, from whatever districts they come, so that the maximum Appeal Court that can be constituted in that manner would be twenty-four.

Passing from the counties I come to the burghs, and the burghs, of course, as I have already explained, mean all the burghs with over 7,000 population. Here we have determined to leave the licensing authority of first instance as it was. On the whole it has worked well, and we do not think there is any desire to alter the magisterial jurisdiction, and accordingly we propose to allow that the licensing authority in burghs with a population over 7,000 should be the magistrates of the burghs. So far that is simple enough, but when you come to the Appeal Court you necessarily have a little more complication, which we have got over, I hope, with simplicity. I hope I shall be able to explain it clearly. In the constitution of the Appeal Court the desire will be that the burghs themselves should have some representation. Hitherto, as hon. Members know, in the Appeal Court they have had none; that is to say, the appeal from the magistrates was to the Justices of the Peace of the county. The burghs were not at all represented except in so far as certain persons in the burghs might be Justices of the Peace of the county. We propose to take some proportion, and the Appeal Court should be constituted one-third of magistrates and two-thirds of justices. But now comes this matter which is a little complicated. You see it would be quite impossible to have a separate Appeal Court for each burgh, because that would come to be a perfectly preposterous number, the number of burghs being so large. At the same time we think that you cannot keep in our idea of giving a burgh a certain amount of representation in that Appeal Court if you simply made one Appeal Court for all the burghs in particular counties, because there the numbers would be so large that if you were to put in somebody from each burgh you would have a perfectly unmanageable court.

The way we propose to get over that difficulty is this: to group the burghs into two classes. There is one class of burghs, very few in number, which create no difficulty. These burghs are county cities, and there are only four of them, viz., Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Dundee. With them there is no difficulty, because you have the Justices of the Peace of the county and of the city acting as an appropriate tribunal representing the city. All other burghs we propose to divide into two groups—those between 7,000 and 20,000, and those above 20,000. Now for those between 7,000 and 20,000 we propose to have one Appeal Court for each county arranged by Schedule, and the necessity for arranging it by Schedule is this—that when you come to look at the burghs and where they are, you would find that the counties in Scotland differ very much. That is to say, some of them have only one burgh, whereas some others have a good many. For instance, Argyll has only one burgh over 7,000 inhabitants, viz., Campbeltown. Forfar, on the other hand, has four burghs—Montrose, Brechin, Forfar and Arbroath. Renfrew has five—Port Glasgow, Pollockshaws, Johnston, Barrhead and Renfrew. Accordingly in the case of Renfrewshire, in order to secure the adequate representation of the burghs—and if I know anything of small town life there is no confidence in one small burgh in the representation that would be given to it by another small burgh. That is to say, you would not satisfy, for instance, Port Glasgow by saying that Renfrew is to send somebody to the Appeal Court. If you give representation in the case of Renfrewshire you must have a larger Court than you have in the case of Argyll, because you have got all these burghs to represent in Renfrewshire and only one in Argyll. Accordingly we do that by Schedule, but the result is to confine the Appeal Court within perfectly manageable numbers. The minimum of the Court in the burghs of from 7,000 to 20,000 is nine, and the maximum eighteen. The maximum is given to Dumbarton, which has many burghs of large size. In burghs above 20,000 we propose to have a separate Court for each burgh, composed of the whole of the magistrates in that burgh with a number of Justices of the Peace added, making two-thirds Justices of the Peace, and one-third represented by the magistrates. But there again the numbers are kept within perfectly reasonable limits, because the maximum Appeal Court would only be the comparatively moderate figure of twenty-seven. Hon. Members will remember that since the Town Councils Act of 1900 the number of magistrates is fixed in burghs according to the scale of population. In each case we take the whole of the magistrates and add twice their number from the Justices of the Peace—making the Court.

There remain only those very large cities which are themselves county cities, and where they do not have recourse to the county justices at all, but compose the Appeal Court with their own magistrates and two-thirds of their own Justices of the Peace. We hope that that result, although somewhat complicated in the Schedule, is perfectly simple. It is merely carrying out the idea of giving the burghs one-third representation by their magistrates and two-thirds from the justices of the county of the city, instead of, as at present, giving the appeal to the Justices of the Peace. And it will have this result, if the House sanctions this scheme that there would be a court of perfectly workable size which would be able to carry on the business according to the true spirit of the law as laid down by the

Lord Chancellor in the case of Sharpe *v.* Wakefield. Of course, I am quite aware that no one approaches this subject and supposes that he is going to give satisfaction to all who have views upon it. That would be indeed foolish. On the other hand, I am very far from being apologetic about the matter. I have not mentioned the Majority or Minority Report of the Royal Commission. As hon. Members will find, as a matter of fact we have confined ourselves to neither of these Reports; but we have taken what we consider to be the best out of the recommendations of both. There is no slavish adherence to the Report of the Majority or that of the Minority; and what I do say is that although no one can expect to please everybody, we certainly ask this Bill to be considered as a fair and honest contribution to the cause of temperance, and I ask the House to grant leave for its introduction, and that it be read a first time.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs): I am glad that the right hon. Gentleman has not introduced this Bill under the Ten Minutes Rule, and that, therefore, it will be competent for hon. Members especially those who represent Scottish constituencies, to express their opinions at this the earliest stage of this important measure. The House is well aware that in Scotland there is, and always has been, a very intense feeling on this particular subject. I suppose it will be readily acknowledged that we are, not only in point of law, but in point of the aspirations of almost the entire community in Scotland, very far ahead of the general feeling in England, and therefore Scotland should be treated in an exceptional manner. There is no desire to attempt to dwell for a moment on the immense evil that arises in Scotland, within our own knowledge, from this traffic, but on all sides there will be a great desire to take exceptional advantage of this opportunity of making a step in advance on this subject.

The right hon. and learned Gentleman has referred to the English precedent of last year. I have no doubt that that Act will do good, but, at the same time —and the Lord Advocate will not hear it for the first time—we in Scotland do not consider that we ought to be fettered in any way by English precedents in regard to this class of legislation. We have our own system and our own needs, and there is no necessity that these needs should be limited by English precedents. If I were to speak only on one point in reference to the statement of the Lord Advocate, it would be in regard to his omissions. We have had a Minority Report and a Majority Report from the Royal Commission, differing very much in regard to liquor licences, and yet I am sorry to say that there are no provisions in the right hon. and learned Gentleman's Bill which would assist us to get rid of unnecessary licences; nor is there anything at all—I did not expect it from this Government—to afford any assistance in the direction of granting popular control. So far as the subject is touched upon at all—as I understood the statement of the Lord Advocate—there is an indirect popular control, but it is circumscribed to some extent by certain proposals in the Bill. It is unnecessary to express disappointment, but it is right to say that, notwithstanding these proposals, with some of which I am content, it is not at all likely that they can be regarded as an adequate measure such as will be acceptable to the great majority of the people of Scotland. It is perfectly right that the *bonâ fide* traveller should be limited to the liquor he himself uses. With that we all agree. And I hope that strong rules will be made in regard to travelling vans, which undoubtedly have done a great deal of harm in the country districts of Scotland. A very fruitful suggestion was made by the Lord Advocate, to which I wish to do full justice, viz., that by-laws, subject to the approval of the Secretary for Scotland, should be made by the licensing authorities. There is a system of recommendations which to a certain extent is already in existence, but it is not clothed with the authority of law. I am perfectly satisfied that the system is operative, but it should be placed in the more normal position. I am very glad that there can be by-laws made containing conditions on which licences may be granted, and I express the hope that the limit within which these by-laws can be framed may be made very wide, so as to give a great discretion to the licensing authorities to make the by-laws suitable to different localities. I see no reason why they should not be framed in a generous spirit.

Then the right hon. Gentleman spoke of clubs. There, again, I wholly agree with him. I am acquainted with the fact that there are many, many bogus clubs in many parts of Scotland which do an immense deal of harm, and I have frequently had complaints made to me not only of the drunkenness but of the disorder and scandal created by these clubs. It is perfectly right to make strong proposals for the purpose of preventing them, and I do not believe that any Scottish Member will in any way do other than help the Lord Advocate forward in this good work. The next subject the right hon. Gentleman dealt with was the licensing authority, and I wish to preface the few remarks I would make on that with one observation. He said, as if some very special significance attached to it, that the Lord Chancellor laid down, in Sharpe *v.* Wakefield, that judicial discretion must be exercised by magistrates in granting licences, and he said that in Scotland there was not the smallest doubt that the fullest and freest power existed to grant or refuse licences merely on the ground of popular convenience. Never has there been the smallest doubt in Scotland, and I might add never has there been the smallest doubt in any well-informed legal circles in England, that the law is exactly the same. I remember when Sir Richard Webster and Sir Edward Clarke, two very distinguished men, for whom I have the greatest respect, some fifteen years ago told the House of Commons that a *mandamus* would be granted by the English Courts to compel the renewal of a licence unless some case of misconduct was shown. I remember also endeavouring to contradict that, together with other hon. Members; and, fortunately, the case of Sharpe *v.* Wakefield came to be decided in ten days from that time in the court of first instance. The consequence was that the proposal which the Government then had in hand, which would confer practically a freehold on licence holders in England, was defeated by a decision of the courts which had been anticipated in many analogous cases. I think there is no real doubt about the law at all. At all events there is no doubt about it in Scotland, and when the right hon. Gentleman uses the phrase, "judicial discretion," I beg to say, if I may, that he has somewhat misunderstood it. It merely means that discretion must be exercised by magistrates on material open to the court. It means that the court must not refuse or grant a licence because of some personal matter, or mere whim or caprice, but is entitled to consider all the circumstances, and among the most important of these circumstances is whether the licence is required in the public interest or not. When the Lord Chancellor spoke of judicial discretion, I am perfectly certain that that very learned and noble person would not dispute that judicial discretion merely meant that discretion was to be exercised honestly, and in face of all the facts, in order to try and arrive at a just decision.

In regard to the scheme, notwithstanding the lucidity with which it has been placed before us, it is too complicated to criticise on the spur of the moment; and therefore, before saying anything further, I will wait until I see the Bill. But the right hon. Gentleman may expect thunder and lightning with respect to the proposal to take away jurisdiction from the Royal burghs and confer it on a mixed tribunal of county justices and County Councillors, two-thirds of which shall consist of county justices. That is likely to provide comment and criticism, and I anticipate that the right hon. Gentleman will hear something about it before very long. I say nothing about it except that I have misgivings as to conferring so large a share of jurisdiction upon county justices; but I would prefer to leave the matter there, as it is impossible to discuss it as a whole until we see the clauses. I will only say that I hope that we shall have a fair interval between this and the second reading, in order that the opinion of our constituents may be fully taken. I think it is a matter of great importance, but I feel sure that there will be great regret that this Bill does not go farther. It is no doubt well meant, but it does not go far. It is a small instalment of what we might have in Scotland, but my view is, and always has been, that we ought to make the best of any step in the right direction. We are in a hopeless minority, and I think our proper course is to make this Bill as effective as we can in the direction which, I have no doubt, is desired by the Lord Advocate himself. Let us have a fair time to have it fully discussed, and to bring what pressure we can on the Government in order to try and induce them, if possible, to go a little further.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I make no apology for saying a few words on this Bill, because, although I do not now represent a Scottish constituency, I did so for many years, and I have taken a continuous interest in local affairs, especially in the matter dealt with by this measure. I think it is fortunate that this Bill has been introduced so early in the session in order that it may be fully considered before the Second Reading. Although great reforms have been made in Scotland, and great improvements in the social condition of that country have been introduced by the restrictions placed on the liquor traffic—restrictions greater by far than have been attempted in England or Ireland—still all concerned in the welfare of Scotland will admit that the excessive drinking habits of some people are a great blot on our country; and I am glad to hear from the Lord Advocate that increased power will be given to the local authorities to put restrictions on facilities for drunkenness, especially at times of the year when excessive drinking most prevails. I have myself been a witness of most painful scenes in Scotland. The 1st of January is a very festive day in Scotland, and in a large populous place near where I was staying it was remarked with pain the number of persons including females who were in the streets in a state of intoxication. It is quite evident that it is consonant with the feelings of the country that increased power should be placed in the hands of magistrates to check the indulgence in liquor on such occasions.

My right hon. friend said that an Amendment would be provided in this Bill with respect to *bonâ fide* travellers. It happened that I was one of the Bench of magistrates in the Oliver case, and we were very greatly astonished when our decision was upset. I am very glad that the fault disclosed by that case is to be remedied. My right hon. friend also referred to the Amendment which he proposed to make in the law to meet the case of the great abuse which prevails in connection with the free sale of intoxicating liquor in grocers' travelling vans. In the mining districts especially it is monstrous that these vans should go about selling liquor just as if they were itinerant public-houses. Twenty-eight years ago I was Chairman of a Royal Commission which inquired into the question of grocers' licences in Scotland; and, apart from myself, the members of that Commission were all extremely able and experienced men. We made a report in which we pointed out defects which prevailed in the law, and we made recommendations to remedy these defects, but nothing has been done from that day to this; and for two reasons. The first great reason is that the recommendations did not satisfy extreme temperance reformers. They were not so anxious that the liquor laws should be improved, as that they wanted them to be made so strict that the taking of liquor might be made a criminal offence. Another reason was that the licensed grocer might count in politics. Will English Members readily believe that it was possible and common, until the Act of last session was passed, to send a child to a public-house in Scotland with a cup to take home spirits? Women also went to grocers' shops and tossed off whiskey behind a conveniently-placed screen. I hope that in this Bill the defects in the law affecting off licences will be dealt with, and that the selling of liquor by grocers' travelling vans will be put down. In a Bill which I presented last year along with the Member for Partick, we not only provided for all the points taken by the Commission, but we were able to meet the objections of the trade and make the measure protective and at the same time interfere as little as possible with legitimate trade. With regard to the Licensing Courts, hon. Members from Scotland will agree with me when I say that the Licensing Courts are unsatisfactory, and the Appeal Court is a public scandal. There is nothing so common, when licences have been refused by the local Bench, for the Justices of the Peace who constitute the Appeal Court to be canvassed right and left. They come to the court like people going to an election. I hope that sort of thing is going to be put an end to, and I am glad that, although the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite says the Bill does not go so far as he would like to have gone, he will offer his powerful assistance towards a reform that is much needed in Scotland, and one which will be welcomed by the respectable part of the community.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): I can join in the congratulations of the hon. and learned Gentleman beside me to the right hon. Gentleman the Lord Advocate for having introduced this Bill so early, but there are one or two points to which I would draw attention. First, with regard to the areas of population. I think a population of 7,000 is too small. I think it is too small for the police authorities, and I think it is too small for the licensing authorities. I wish it could have been a bigger area. With regard to the county areas and districts, I believe, for the purposes of effective administration —which is all we have to attend to after all—it is unfortunate for the people that they are not larger. The licensing body, on the other hand, is, I think, a little too large. My own view is in favour of popular control, but I recognise there are difficulties in the way, and our aim should be to have as strong a licensing body as possible. Owing to the way in which the liquor trade is conducted by private persons in their own interests, it is essential to have as strong a licensing body as possible, and, in my opinion, the smaller it is the stronger it would be, as a rule. Attempts have been made, I believe, in Glasgow to get at the justices, and the stronger you make your Court the less likely it is that outside influences would be brought to bear upon it. I agree in thinking that the Bill is not an adequate Bill, while, at the same time, it effects some very useful reforms. I should have liked to have seen one of the recommendations of the Peel Report brought into it, and that is the fixing of a date after which there should be no question of compensation for any licences withdrawn, and I should have liked to have seen some provision made by which a locality could claim from the licensing authorities the right to have its supply of liquor conducted under the Scandinavian system. Under the liquor law of the Transvaal, promulgated by Lord Milner last year, any community has the right to have its supply of liquor conducted under the Trust system, and the trusts are bound to give the supply of liquor necessary for the community. Once new licences—it may be of considerable value—are given, the difficulty in the way of a community conducting its liquor trade under the Trust system is greatly increased, and must be so until it is recognised that after the lapse of a certain number of years the holder of a licence shall not be entitled to compensation in the event of the licence being withdrawn. The reason I venture to lay so much stress upon this point is that it is only by doing away with compensation that you can insure pure local administration. So long as the liquor trade is conducted for private profit the local administration is exposed to very great risk, and I do not think you can have any great reform until the liquor trade is removed from private interests. But, however far we may look ahead in the direction of putting the liquor trade under popular control, we shall certainly welcome the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. PARKER SMITH (Lanarkshire, Partick): I believe all Scottish Members are unanimous in considering the subject of this Bill a subject deserving of the greatest consideration in Scotland, and they will all be desirous to assist the Government in making this Bill a workable one. It is no use now to make a speech on the details, and the only point which occurs to me upon the speech of the Lord Advocate is that I think the County Council element is too small and the Justice of the Peace element is too large. And with regard to taking any power away from the County Councils, I do not think that is a thing that will be welcomed in Scotland. We complain that this Bill does not go far enough. There are many of us in Scotland who have supported measures going a good deal farther. We have knowledge of the circumstances of Scotland, and of the great evil of drink in Scotland, and we think it would be wiser to deal with that evil in a much more drastic way than is necessary in England. We hope it may be possible, without delay, to deal with this matter, and that this Bill of the Government may be strengthened in its passage through the House. I hope this Bill will be referred to a Committee mainly Scottish in its character, and I think upon its merits it will receive the support of public opinion in Scotland—not only by hon. Gentlemen opposite but, as I believe, the vast number of the supporters of the Government in Scotland itself as well as in this House. I hope the Government will be willing to test that opinion, and, with the force of Scottish opinion behind them, will be willing to go as far as possible consistently with the passage of this Bill through the House. We desire the Bill to be strengthened as much as possible.

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): Although I do not sit for a Scottish constituency, I have a large interest in this question, and therefore have no apology to make for intervening in this debate. I do not envy the Lord Advocate in the task he has set himself, and I do not agree with the hon. Member for North-East Manchester, who has told the House that our Licensing Courts are corrupt, and the Court of Appeal a public scandal. I do not believe any man in any other country would dare to get up and make such a statement.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): I think the hon. Member is in error in saying the hon. Member for North-East Manchester said the Courts were corrupt; he did not say any such thing.

MAJOR JAMESON: He said they were canvassed as if they were going to the poll, and that the Court of Appeal was a public scandal, and if that is not corruption it looks very much like it. I do not see in what way the Bill of the Lord Advocate is going to help that. I was also astonished to hear the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries, when speaking on the subject of licences, tell us of the honesty of taking away licences without giving compensation.

SIR ROBERT REID: It is not only honest, it is the bounden duty of the authorities.

MAJOR JAMESON: I do not agree with the hon. and learned Gentleman, for the simple reason that in 1881, when the tax on spirits was increased, it was stated by the Government of the day that that money should be put on one side for compensation for licences which were taken away. Therefore, in the opinion of the Government, at any rate, it was only honest that these licences should be compensated. I must differ, therefore, with the hon. and learned Gentleman as to the honesty of any court of justice that would take away from any trade a licence granted by Act of Parliament without compensation, unless the licencee broke the law. I trust the Lord Advocate will not bring a hornet's nest about his ears by binding anyone to the extraordinary ideas of the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries. The Lord Advocate has stated that the Bill is founded neither on the Majority Report nor on the Minority Report of the Royal Commission. I do not think that with any show of justice a Bill could be founded on a Minority Report. The right hon. and learned Member says he has rejected the Royal Commission. Having appointed that Commission, I think you are in honour and honesty bound to stand by the Majority Report, which, after long and careful research by the greatest authorities on the trade, was agreed to by a majority of seven. I do not envy the Lord Advocate his task; he will offend his friends, and in no way placate his enemies.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I rise for the purpose of saying a few words in reference to the observations of the hon. Member who has just sat down. I should have been content, and I think the House generally would have been, to leave a Scottish Bill of this character to the Scottish Members. Even those on this side of the House who are not Home Rulers would be glad to let this strictly Scottish subject be treated from the Scottish point of view without any Irish or English interference. Our function in a matter of this kind is simply to strengthen the hands of the mass of Scottish Members in endeavouring to make the Bill as effective for its purpose as possible. The moment a Temperance Bill, no matter what its character, appears in this House, the hon. Gentleman opposite is certain to rise, as one of the representatives of Ireland, on behalf of "honour and honesty." He has just said that the Government is bound in honour and honesty to act on the Majority Report of the Royal Commission. I would like to know whether the hon. Member would support such a Bill. I venture to say he would be the first to oppose it, and, without doubt, would plead "honour and honesty" in his opposition. I have risen simply to protest against the hon. Member, as a representative of Ireland, putting any difficulty in the way of this modest and, as I think, harmless Bill; I hope he will think better of it, and even use his influence in favour of the measure.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I have only a few words to add to what has been said in this debate. Unquestionably, as we gather its provisions from the very clear statement of the Lord Advocate, it does introduce some considerable improvements into our Scottish law. I can assure English Members that the opinion of Scotland is a great deal more ripe in regard to temperance legislation than that of England. I am persuaded that if the Government had gone further they would have had just as generous and cordial support from Scottish opinion irrespective of Party, as they will have for the good provisions of the Bill now introduced. I should like to support the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Manchester with regard to the present condition of the Scottish Licensing Courts. Those courts cause the greatest dissatisfaction in Scotland. The proposals of the Bill, taking them all in all, will, I believe, effect some improvement, but at the same time I regret that the Government do not propose to give in the counties the decision upon licences entirely to the Councils. I see no occasion whatever for bringing in the justices. Justices in Scotland have very different functions from the justices in England; they are far less important; they have much less to do; and the position is not sought after to the same degree. We should have been perfectly satisfied if this matter had been left in the hands of the elected representatives of the people, and I think the general feeling in the country would be in favour of such a plan. With regard to the small burghs, the proposal of the Government will actually have the effect of making the constitution of the licensing court less popular than it is at present. In the burghs which have hitherto been Royal burghs, but which will lose their privileges under this Bill if they have a population of less than 7,000, the authority will become less popular, because the justices will be brought in where they have hitherto had no functions at all. I suppose the idea of the Lord Advocate is that in constituting these courts the whole of the justices will elect certain of their number to represent them, and I presume he makes provision in the Bill as to the method by which that election should be effected. These, however, are details upon which I do not wish to dwell at present. I hope the Government will pay attention to the wish expressed by the hon. Member for the Partick Division, as well as by Gentlemen on this side, that the Bill should be referred to a Scottish Committee. If the Government cannot make up their mind to let it be a purely Scottish Committee, I hope they will make it substantially Scottish. There is hardly a Member from Scotland who ought not to be allowed an opportunity at the Committee stage of expressing the view of his constituents on a question such as this. I hope that in Committee the Bill will be substantially improved. I am sure the Lord Advocate will not desire to deal with the matter in a Party spirit, and I trust that the Government will not resist Amendments if they are satisfied, as it will be the duty of Scottish Members to satisfy them, that those Amendments represent the general wish and mind of the people of Scotland.

"Bill to amend the Licensing (Scotland) Acts, 1828 to 1897," ordered to be brought in by The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland, and Mr. Anstruther.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Licensing (Scotland) Acts, 1828 to 1897," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 75.]

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. HANBURY, Preston), in asking leave to introduce a Bill to amend the law with regard to the sale of adulterated butter, said: This is a Bill which I think I might not unreasonably have proposed to introduce under the "Ten Minutes Rule," because its proposals are practically the same as those of the Bill brought in last session and read a second time without opposition. However, as there are some alterations in the measure, perhaps it is right that I should explain it more fully to the House. About a year ago the Board of Agriculture had to fix the standard for butter. Acting on the recommendation of a strong Departmental Committee, they fixed the standard at only 16 per cent.; that is to say, that butter might contain 16 per cent. of water. That was a very lenient standard, because all the evidence went to show that so far from butter, when properly or genuinely made, containing anything like 16 per cent., the average was nearer 11 or 12 per cent. That being the case, if anybody sells butter containing more than 16 per cent. of water, the presumption against him is that the butter is not genuine butter. Of course, if he can establish the fact that it is made in the ordinary way and that there has been no added water, the law is on his side, and no conviction follows. But there is being sold now as butter a large quantity of an article in which the water has been added after the process of churning—that is to say, it can in no sense be described as genuine butter, and it is largely to meet the trade in that adulterated article that this Bill is introduced.

The way in which it is proposed to deal with the sale of the adulterated article is the following: No butter containing more than 20 per cent. of water—which is a very high amount, and can never be obtained in honestly-made butter—will under any circumstances be allowed to be sold. Then I come to the question of butter containing between 16 and 20 per cent. of water. In the case of butter of that kind, except the vendor can show that it is genuine butter, he will be liable to conviction unless he has sold the butter practically under the provisions of the Margarine Act, subject to the penalties provided for in that Act for the sale of butter adulterated with fat. There is this exception—that on the label and in the description of the butter, instead of the word "Margarine" the words "Adulterated Butter" will be used.

Now there are three classes of people who are distinctly interested in the passing of a Bill of this kind. In the first place, there is the producer, the dairy farmer, whose industry, as a rule, is a very large and growing one, and who has a clear right to the use of the trade description "butter," which should be made a recognisable article, and it is unfair to the producer that any other article should be sold under that name which is not genuine and honest butter. This applies not only to the home producer; but even more anxious for the passing of this Bill are the farmers scattered throughout our colonies, especially in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, because it is to a very large extent that their butter is adulterated, Their butter is very dry butter, and contains only 9 or 10 per cent. of water; consequently, it is precisely butter of that kind where the largest margin of adulteration is possible. This butter is very largely adulterated, and in consequence discredit is being thrown upon the colonial manufacturers, and I have received requests from the agents of all the butter-producing colonies that this Bill should be passed into law. But not only are the producers interested in a Bill of this kind, but I should think there never was a Bill upon which the traders throughout the country were so unanimous. The grocers in every borough and district of England are unanimous—that is, the men who sell honest butter—in favour of this measure. Those who sell the genuine article are anxious to have this adulterated butter, if it is to be sold at all, sold under its true name as an adulterated article. The traders desire to sell butter honestly which is not adulterated, but they find competition with the adulterated article is increasing day by day.

It may be said that this is a case in which the buyer of this article ought to be on the look-out, and that the buyer ought to know what he is buying. I think the doctrine of *caveat emptor* is often carried to extreme lengths. We know very often that the people most imposed upon are the very poor and ignorant, and it is perfectly absurd to suppose that these people should know exactly what is the right amount of water in butter. I propose by this Bill that these poor and ignorant people shall know what they are buying; and if they buy an adulterated article, this Bill provides that it should be stamped as such, and then these poor people will know exactly what they are buying. But while I am thus protecting the consumer and the honest trader, with regard to the honest producer no harm can be done to him. There is one trade to which I wish to allude, and it is the trade in Irish salt firkin butter, where it is a certain necessity that the amount of water should exceed 15 per cent. Therefore, Irish salt firkin butter is excluded from the operation of the 16 per cent. standard, but under no circumstances must such butter contain more than 20 per cent. of water. Irish salt firkin butter, being a known and well recognised article of trade which is sold to a great extent in the large manufacturing towns in Lancashire, is excluded from the operation of that particular clause which provides for not more than 15 per cent. of water. In the case of all producers, where they can show that the butter is genuine butter through the ordinary process of manufacture, and where they can show that the butter has not been manipulated as a butter—I am principally aiming this Bill at butter which is manipulated—the proof will lie upon them to show that it is genuine, and if they can show that the butter has not been manipulated, then no conviction will follow. I think it was necessary to introduce this Bill briefly as I have done. I really do not know where the opposition is to come from to such a Bill as this, except from those interested in the sale of adulterated articles. I hope the time has come when everybody will agree that we ought to protect more the poor and the ignorant against the dishonest trader than we have done in the past. (A NATIONALIST MEMBER: Will Irish firkin butter containing more than 16 per cent. of water have to be marked adulterated?) No. I hope this Bill will have the effect of putting an end to a form of adulteration which is growing every day, and I hope it will put an end to an evil which in recent years has been increasing more and more in all our large towns.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Many Irish butter producers and many Irish dealers as represented by the Cork Butter Market Association hold strongly to the view that an honest butter, even a salt butter, can be made, and very well made, under 16 per cent. average of water. I have personal knowledge of a community that has been directing close attention to this particular aspect of the case within the past two years. They have taken some thousands of specimens both of butter in firkins and boxes, and they have found the average to be about 13 per cent. of water. This result has been arrived at by taking all kinds of butters, including fresh butter, mild cured butter, and the heaviest sort of butter, and they have established the fact that Irish salt butter can be carefully and honestly made with an average of 13 per cent. of moisture. I am sure that all those interested in the production of an honest article will welcome this Bill. There cannot be any doubt that in many parts of this country, and in many parts of Ireland, farmers' butter has been adulterated with margarine, and there is no doubt at all that many dishonest traders have been in the habit of adulterating butter with added water, thus imposing upon the poor consumers. As an Irish Member interested in the production of honest Irish butter, and as one who knows the opinion of the largest butter market in the world, namely, the Cork Butter Market, I say that we are glad that this Bill has been brought in, and I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that he will find no opposition from the Irish Members.

MR. A. K. LOYD (Berkshire, Abingdon): I should like to say one or two words of welcome in regard to this Bill. Not only will the home and colonial producers and the retailers of butter welcome this Bill, but the vendors of butter substitutes will also be ready to recognise the care which the right hon. Gentleman has given to framing a just and proper measure upon this question. It must have been no easy task for the right hon. Gentleman to have drawn up a measure which is fair both to the manufacturers of artificial and wholesome dairy products and butter substitutes and at the same time draw a Bill stringent enough to grapple with this very ingenious and plausible form of fraud. I do not think fraud is at all too strong a word to apply to it after the result of the inquiry and investigation which has taken place upon this question during the last two years. While I hold very strongly that all attempts to regulate or restrict trade should be watched most carefully, I have been very greatly impressed by the attitude assumed by all the respectable retail dealers in butter upon this question. They have most distinctly stated that they considered that the consumer was defrauded by the so-called milk-blended butter. It was not the milk which remained in the butter but the water, and this was the most plausible and ingenious way of imposing upon the consumer. The retailers of this country have asked that this method of imposing upon the public should be stopped as speedily as possible, and made illegal, and for this very remarkable reason—that if it were allowed to become general and treated as legal they themselves in self-defence would be obliged to resort to this form of trade, which they do not approve of, in order to avoid being squeezed out by a form of competition which they could not cope with. I think this ought to carry conviction to the most scrupulous mind as to the necessity of regulating this trade as much as possible. This argument from the retailer shows how deadly unfair and how profitable this form of competition was, and it shows how great is the need for legislation. I shall not say any more upon this occasion beyond stating that on behalf of an agricultural constituency, and on behalf of the retail grocers throughout my constituency, I desire to thank the right hon. Gentleman for introducing this Bill.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I think the motives of the right hon. Gentleman are very good in bringing in this Bill. He has told us candidly that he has been moved to this action practically by the proceedings of a certain large firm of traders in this country. If that be so, I think to introduce a general Act of Parliament because of the proceedings of a single firm may be looked upon as somewhat suspicious.

MR. HANBURY: I did not say so, and there is more than one firm.

MR. LOUGH: That should not prevent us giving the question a fair consideration; but the House ought to remember that this is practically the third attempt made by the right hon. Gentleman to deal with this matter. We had a Bill of this kind before us all last year, and a good deal of time was taken up with it, but now we have a Bill before us which is proceeding on an entirely different principle. The Bill of last year was introduced in the same eulogistic terms as the right hon. Gentleman has applied to this Bill, and he received then the same amount of general gratification from both sides of the House. And yet the President of the Board of Agriculture found it quite impossible to proceed with his measure. If the Bill of last year was bad, I think this measure is a great deal worse. And it contains provisions which it will be extremely difficult to enforce. I advise the right hon. Gentleman to examine this question very carefully before he proceeds to waste the time of the House of Commons upon it. One of the provisions of the measure is that butter containing more than 20 per cent. should be excluded altogether. How is that to be done? It is easy to say that. How many transactions may there be in which there will be 20½ per cent., and what is to be done with the sellers who may be quite innocent in the matter? What punishment is to be put on them? That strikes me as a most difficult provision to enforce. The right hon. Gentleman said there was one class of butter that must be altogether excluded from the operations of the Bill. Practically the arguments that apply to that class apply to all butter. [Cries of "No."] It would be very much better if the hon. Gentlemen who do not agree with what I say would speak afterwards. Why should any different law be extended to Irish butter which is not extended to butter from the Highlands of Scotland or from Wales? It is admitted that salt butter may contain, without any fraud, up to 20 per cent. of water. How do we know that it may not be 21 or 22 per cent.? I believe it is in the western parts of Kerry and in the remote districts of Ireland that this butter is produced.

The butter which contains 21 and 22 per cent. of water is produced in those places where primitive methods are employed. The right hon. Gentleman has stated that he is going to be as stiff about this butter from Ireland as the butter which comes from any other place. I think it will be extremely difficult to do this. There is another distinction with regard to butter containing from 16 to 20 per cent. This is to be called adulterated butter, and the onus of proof is to lie with the seller to show that it is not adulterated. All this ingenious arrangement is to be applied to one of the greatest articles of consumption, which is sold in the greatest variety of shapes in this country. It is the second or third time that the right hon. Gentleman has made an attempt to deal with it. I would put it to him that he is making an attempt to deal with the question before the Committee which is considering the matter have presented their Report. There is a Committee, presided over by Mr. Horace Plunkett. We have no Report before us or any evidence. I think the motives of the right hon. Gentleman are good, but he has not considered the subject thoroughly, and I think it would be better, after the failure of last session, if the Government would take time before bringing in another Bill.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone S): This question has been considered by the Food and Drugs Committee, which sat for three sessions. I had the misfortune to be Chairman of the Committee for two sessions. If the hon. Member for West Islington wishes information, I would invite him to go to the Library and refer to the volumes containing the evidence brought before the Committee, and he will get as much as will please any ordinary man. I have heard to-night with very great gratification the statement made by one of the Members for Cork County, that the butter merchants are convinced that this Irish salt butter can be made with 17 per cent. of moisture. All I can say, as Chairman of the Committee, who heard the evidence of witness after witness from Ireland on this subject, is that they asserted, one and all, that it was impossible to make this kind of butter without 18 or 20 per cent. of moisture. One of the most difficult things the Committee had to consider in recommending something such as my right hon. friend is proposing in the Bill, was the danger of ruining this butter trade. Although there may be difficulties about standardising, I think the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Agriculture, in legislating in the interest of the poor consumer who is being deceived, is exercising a wise discretion, and I hope that the Irish Members, notwithstanding what my hon. friend says as to the method of manufacture, will support the measure.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somerset, S.): I desire, on behalf of the British Dairy Farmers Association, of which I am President for the year, to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the introduction of this Bill to amend the law with regard to the sale of adulterated butter. The right hon. Gentleman has told us what this water-logged butter is, and I agree with what he said on the subject. I think also he is perfectly right in saying there is more than one firm that deals in this butter. But supposing there is only one firm dealing in this butter and making enormous profit at the expense of the consumer, the matter would still be one for legislation. It is so profitable to sell butter of which one-fourth is water, that, but for the threat of legislation of this kind, water-logged butter would be thrust on the market, and we should not only have factories set up for its production in this country, but it would be imported to us from abroad. I am of opinion that the standard of 16 per cent. of water is slightly too high, seeing that the average is only 11 per cent., and that, practically speaking, anything short of 15 per cent. can be safely regarded as genuine butter. If the other parts of the Bill are sufficiently strong, I think that is satisfactory as regards the producer. As representing not only an agricultural constituency, but the British Dairy Farmers Association, I welcome the Bill and hope it will receive favourable consideration.

MR. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE (Sussex Horsham): There is another aspect of this question which I do not think was alluded to by my right hon. friend. I mean the aspect which presents itself to those who have committed to them the duty and responsibility of administering the existing law dealing with the adulteration of food and drugs. I have been on the Adulteration Committee of the County Council ever since its formation, and know the extreme difficulty encountered in trying to protect the interests of the honest trader, the producer, and the poor consumer, because we have been defeated again and again in those matters by trade descriptions or names which may have been apparent to trade experts, but which do not bring any idea of adulteration home to the minds of the innocent consumer. Therefore I think the right hon. Gentleman is heartily to be congratulated in having taken his courage in both hands and in having described this butter as what it is, namely, an adulterated article, and I hope the Bill will have the almost unanimous support of the House and will be carried to a successful conclusion.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork Co., W.): I wish to draw the attention of the President of the Board of Agriculture to the following Resolutions, unanimously adopted on 27th February at a meeting of the Cork Butter Trade—

"(1) That we fully endorse the views given expression to by Mr. Hanbury, M.P., at Preston, on the 21st inst., to the Lancashire Farmers Association, viz:—'That in the case of butter containing more than 16 per cent. of water, if that percentage could not be proved to be the result of the legitimate process of manufacture, it should be sold as adulterated butter, and that if butter contained more than 20 per cent. of water it should not be sold at all.'

"(2) That we declare the exemption of Irish firkin butter from the general standard would be disastrous to the Irish trade, as then the adulterated butter of all countries would be sold as Irish butter."

In support of the above I beg to state that for the past season the standard of 16 per cent. having been adopted at the Cork butter Market—which is the largest *Firkin Butter* Market in the United Kingdom—the working of the same gave results beyond the highest expectations. This confirms the butter merchants in the opinion that this standard should be fixed for all Irish butter.

*MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): So far as the right hon. Gentleman's statement was concerned, I think we may approve of that. I am sure this is a measure which will be welcomed by every honest dairy farmer, and it will also be welcomed by that large class of consumers who wish to get the article for which they pay. There is nothing whatever Protective about this Bill. The only protection it affords is the protection of the consumer against fraud. I think that is a very valuable protection indeed. I think it will be extremely valuable to the poorer class, because, after all, they are the people who are more apt to suffer from adulterated articles than the richer class. It is gratifying that the Minister of Agriculture has recognised how much butter is growing in the public estimation as an article of diet. Now nine doctors out of ten recommend the consumption of butter, especially in cases of phthisis. I think invalids should get the article they desire. I believe the Bill will be an advantage not only to the poorer classes but also to the honest producer.

*MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said there was good reason why the exemption should be made in the case of the Irish butter trade. There was a great demand for Irish firkin butter in the large manufacturing towns in the North of England. The trade had been in existence for a long time, and there was an immense turnover. The butter was made in districts where the most modern appliances were not available, and it was sometimes necessary that at least 18 per cent. of water should remain in the article. The Committee which sat upon this Bill for three years reported that salt Irish firkin butter would not, as a general rule, have less than 18 per cent. of water; and he thought that the unanimous Report of that Committee ought to have great weight with the House in dealing with the present Bill. It was with very great regret that he had to differ in this matter from the two hon. Members who represented Cork. These hon. Gentlemen spoke only in the interests of the Cork Butter Market, but Cork was not all Ireland, and the rest of Ireland differed from the views expressed by the hon. Gentlemen. The hon. Member for West Cork had stated that the Cork market for salted firkin butter was the biggest market in the United Kingdom. It might be that that market was the largest bulk butter market in the United Kingdom, but the trade was mainly in factory or creamery butter. A Cork man who was a trustee of the Cork Butter Market and had given evidence before the Departmental Committee, had stated that his trade in the Cork market in salt firkin butter was only about 100 firkins a week.

Mr. GILHOOLY said he had got his information from the Secretary of the Cork Butter Market.

* Mr. O'MARA said that the evidence of a trustee of the Cork Butter Market itself was just as much worth the consideration of the House as a letter from the secretary to that market; and that evidence was that the trade in Cork in salt firkin butter was very small indeed. The Cork butter merchants should not stand in the way of the interests of the small dairy farmers in other parts of Ireland, especially in the counties of Clare, Mayo, Tipperary, Limerick and Sligo. He maintained that the bulk of the butter made in these counties could not be produced with less than 18 per cent. of water, and he did not think that the farmers in other parts of Ireland would agree with the hon. Member for N. E. Cork when he said that any butter which contained more than 16 per cent. of water was not honestly manufactured.

* Mr. LUNDON (Limerick, E.) said he did not think that milk blending with real butter was to be recommended, for if that was to be done, and the result sold as real butter, where would the line be drawn at by and by? Already honest butter-makers were liable to suffer from the malpractices of other people. He had interviewed the most important butter merchants in London, Messrs. Kearly & Tonge, Phillips & Sons, Loval & Christmas, and he found that the opinion prevailed that milk blending would ruin the Irish trade in butter, and if milk-blended butter was sold, it ought to be described as such in large, clear letters, "Adulterated Butter." His two hon. friends who represented the county of Cork had spoken on a subject which they knew nothing about. They represented the merchants of Cork, from whom, he contended, the first blow to the butter trade in the South of Ireland had come. Many years ago these merchants in Cork had shipped first-class Irish butter to Denmark, and then re-exported it from Denmark to Great Britain as Danish butter. He represented the dairy farmers of Limerick and Tipperary, and knew something of butter-making, because he was the son of a farmer himself. He could assure the House that they took the greatest care in making their butter, and they never thought of adding 20 per cent. of water. Some hon. Gentlemen had given it as their opinion that 17 or 18 per cent. of water should be allowed in salt firkin butter. He was certain that Limerick mild cure and creamery butter could be produced with 16 per cent. of water. There was no man standing in two shoes who could teach a Limerick farmer's wife in making butter. In large dairy farms, not a great distance from a railway station, mild-cured firkin butter could be made at the 16 per cent. standard, but when the small dairy farms were sixteen to twenty miles distant from a railway station, a larger amount of salt had to be used, which involved a corresponding amount of moisture; and if an uniform standard of 16 per cent. was insisted upon, and the Irish system of putting salt butter on the market was interfered with, there would soon be an agitation amongst the small farmers to pay less rents than at present to the landlords.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): I thank the right hon. Gentleman for introducing this Bill, and for keeping the promise he made to Irish Members who are interested in the Irish salt butter trade. The House would hardly credit the large amount of money that is turned over in twelve months in this particular trade. There is a turnover of £3,000,000 in the Irish salt firkin butter trade in twelve months, and that money is received by a very poor class of the farming community. A Departmental Committee went very fully into this question of butter, including firkin, fresh, and mild cured, and it was thought that the least that could be allowed to Irish firkin butter was 18 per cent. of moisture. That is far from the amount stated by the hon. Member for North Cork, and I think it was proved clearly by my hon. friend the Member for East Limerick, in one of the interviews we had with the President of the Board of Agriculture, that at times the climate of Ireland was so moist that it would be impossible to make butter with less than 20 per cent. of moisture. This butter is mainly consumed in the great manufacturing districts of England, and it is sold at a less price than the ordinary butter. Taking all these things into account, the President of the Board of Agriculture has decided to exempt Irish salt firkin butter when it does not contain more moisture than 20 per cent. I am very glad that he has done this, and I certainly believed all the time that no matter what influence would be brought to bear on the right hon. Gentleman, he would keep his word with the Irish Members. I congratulate him upon having done so, and I also congratulate him on the Bill he has introduced.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): So far as I am concerned, I may say that I opposed a similar measure to this last year, because I thought it was a defective Bill. I still think so, but I wish to call attention to an extraordinary feature which is introduced into this Bill, namely, the exclusion of Ireland from this measure. My hon. friend said he could not understand why Irish butter had been excluded.

MR. HANBURY: Irish butter has not been excluded.

MR. DALZIEL: But why should butter containing such a large percentage of moisture coming from Ireland be allowed to be sold in England. It seems to me that the influence of the eighty Irish Members in the House of Commons is mainly responsible for how Ireland is being treated under this Bill. We must be cautious in dealing with this matter to see that we are not having too much coddling legislation. If the consumer desires to have adulterated butter, and somebody is willing to make it, surely it is a crime that the consumer cannot have such butter.

MR. HANBURY: If the consumer wants adulterated butter he can have it, but it must not have over 20 per cent. of moisture in it.

MR. DALZIEL: As long as it is made perfectly clear that the purchaser knows what he is buying, so far as this Bill aims at achieving that object it shall have my hearty support. At the same time it seems to me at the present moment rather a tall order in a free country that if a man wants 21 per cent. of water in his butter he should not be allowed to have it. That is practically what the Bill lays down, as I understand it. I understand that Irish butter cannot be made with less than 20 per cent. of water.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: It cannot be made with less.

MR. DALZIEL: For the moment, as far as I am concerned, I shall support the Bill so far as it puts down any system of fraudulent trade.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I do not know whether it is worth while for me to say one or two sentences from an Irish point of view in answer to the speech of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. The hon. Gentleman has shown himself, so far as this Bill is concerned, absolutely ignorant of its effect. He started by saying that this Bill exempted Irish butter, but it does nothing of the kind. The Irish salt firkin butter which this Bill deals with and exempts is a very small portion of the butter trade, and I doubt whether it is one-fourth of the whole butter trade in Ireland. The hon. Member asks why should this House exempt butter coming from Ireland and not from England. I would point out to the hon. Member that there is no analogous trade in England. This small Irish salt firkin butter trade exists only in Ireland, and it is chiefly consumed in some of the large towns in England, and very largely in Lancashire and other places in the north, but there is no analogous trade in England. There is no analogous trade even in the colonies or in England or anywhere else. It is a peculiar trade of its kind and the general opinion in Ireland is that that particular kind of butter cannot be made without a larger proportion of moisture than the standard of 16 per cent. I think the position taken up by the Cork butter merchants and some of the farmers in Ireland, is really inconsistent. It may be possible in the future, by employing other methods, to make this Irish salt firkin butter with a less proportion of moisture than at present. I think, therefore, that possibly the Cork butter merchants are right in saying that at some time in the future it may be possible to do that, but so far as the present is concerned, with the present methods employed all over Ireland, it is absolutely certain if you apply the standard of 16 per cent. of moisture you would instantly kill the whole of this butter trade, and it is for that reason that we made this claim upon the right hon. Gentleman. Notwithstanding what has been said on behalf of one or two butter merchants in Cork, the right hon. Gentleman may take it for granted that his Bill will receive the support of the bulk of the Irish Members of this House, that we are grateful to him for introducing it, and we are also grateful to him for having put into his measure the provision which he promised us he would insert. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy Burghs says this provision has been put in in consequence of the influence of eighty Irish Members on the right hon. Gentleman, but that statement is a trifle absurd. This provision has been put in the Bill because the right hon. Gentleman has recognised the justice of saving from extinction altogether this firkin salt butter trade. On the broader aspects of the case everybody ought to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the introduction of a Bill of this kind, which is framed for the purpose of protecting the poorest and the most helpless consumers of this country from having forced upon them adulterated butter.

"Bill to amend the Law with regard to the sale of Adulterated Butter," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hanbury and Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.

SALE OF ADULTERATED BUTTER BILL.

"To amend the Law with regard to the sale of Adulterated Butter," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 76.]

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): It is nearly a hundred years since legislation for the protection of children commenced. Since then a long series of Factory Acts has been passed, the age dealt with has been advanced from eight to twelve, and the hours of labour for children have been limited. And, further than this, a system has been established under which the regular attendance at school is made compulsory, and there has been a provision for half-timers. But the effect of these provisions has been for the most part confined to industries in which children are employed at regular hours and in considerable numbers, and the Education Acts, by making education compulsory, and by prohibiting the labour of children during the hours at which the law requires them to be at school, has made the regular daily employment of children illegal. Up to now the employment of children outside school hours is wholly unregulated. In the year 1901 the late Home Secretary appointed a Committee to enquire into the question of the employment of children during school hours, and they reported that it was desirable to make an alteration in the laws relating to child labour and school attendance, and in the administration of those laws. The Bill that I am now introducing is based upon the recommendations of that Committee.

This measure proposes to give powers to County Councils and to Borough Councils to make bye-laws for regulating the employment of children by prescribing the age below which, and the hours beyond which, employment would be illegal; by prescribing the hours between which it is illegal, and restricting the employment of children in certain specified occupations which may be shown either to be harmful to health or dangerous to their morals. Further, this Bill will prohibit the employment of children in certain specified occupations, such as the carrying of heavy weights and work of that sort, which is undoubtedly injurious to their health, and which is likely to be injurious to life and limb. The bye-laws, of course, will not affect children who are already protected under the Factory Acts and the Mines Acts, and will not apply to children over twelve years of age who, under the Half-Timers Act, are wholly exempted from the obligations to attend school. This measure further gives power to make bye-laws for the regulation of street trading by children under the age of sixteen years, and it prohibits altogether such employment under the age of eleven years. The making of bye-laws is entirely at the option of the Councils, but when they are made they have to receive the sanction of the Secretary of State before they come into operation, and if there be any idea that the scheme does not represent the general view of the locality of course an individual enquiry can be made in that district.

I do not think in introducing a Bill of this sort, which I venture to hope has the general approbation of the whole House, it is necessary to deal very much longer with it. I believe the Bill if it is passed will do a great deal to counteract the dangers to which these children are now exposed, both in regard to their health and morals, and I trust the House will not only allow me to introduce the Bill, but that they will receive it as kindly and with as sincere a promise of success as was promised to a similar Bill last session.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I do not propose to discuss this question now. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on having introduced the Bill and only desire to ask for some information as to the territorial limits of it. I rather gathered from the right hon. Gentleman's remarks that it was a purely English Bill. What I want to know is, is it intended to extend its operations to Scotland?

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: Last year there was a feeling in Scotland against the Bill, but that has passed away and the Bill will now be made to extend to Scotland.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I am obliged to the right hon. Gentleman; that is all I wanted to know.

*MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire): All those hon. and right hon. Members who remember a remarkable speech of the right hon. Member for the Cambridge University upon this subject must congratulate the Secretary of State for Home Affairs upon what he has just said. There are just one or two questions I should like to ask. The right hon. Gentleman said his Bill gave the local authorities power to act in these matters. Does that mean that there is a compulsory power to compel local authorities to carry out the provisions of this Bill? If so I am very glad to hear it, as I was to hear that my native country is not to be debarred from the blessings of this Bill, and I should like to ask whether one of the most significant clauses in the Report of the Committee is given effect to in it. The Clause I refer to is that in which the Committee states that some of the worst evils found in child labour had been found in those small exempted laundries which do not come within the purview of the Factory Act. Some of them are the most evil dens it is possible to conceive, but they were exempted on the ground that only the woman and her children worked there. But the children work intolerably long hours, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman has taken that into account in the measure he now introduces.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): I hope the House will allow me to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for bringing in this Bill at this date, and to express the hope that during the present session it will pass into law. In introducing legislation of this sort I rather regretted that the right hon. Gentleman did not give honour where honour was due. This question was brought to public attention by a lady who, unhappily, is now no more—Mrs. Hogg—who took a vast amount of trouble and made inquiries in schools and other places, and laid very definite information before the Secretary of State of that day, and it is due to her that the Home Secretary and the Board of Education took the matter up and passed the legislation they have. I am sure the whole of us regret that Mrs. Hogg did not live to see the result of her labours. I am sure my right hon. friend may take it that every side of the House will give the greatest service to help him in this matter, but I should like to point out that this Bill only touches the fringe of a great question. At an enormous expense the country provides instruction in our public schools for all the children of the country, but, unhappily, a very great number of those children come to school in a state totally unfit to profit by that instruction; indeed they come to school in such a state that it is absolute cruelty to compel them to engage in intellectual labour, and, in consequence, many of the masters allow these children to sleep at their desks, or, at any rate, do not allow them to take part in the studies. I hope in this Bill the right hon. Gentleman will try and take a broad view, and will afford such protection as will insure that a child shall come to school in a fit state to receive instruction.

*DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.) also congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on this measure. He had worked with Mrs. Hogg in this matter, and lately he had found thousands of cases of little children who, having done twenty-seven-and-a-half hours in school, every week were still putting in anything between thirty and sixty hours of hard and severe labour, working right up to midnight in many cases; children of tender age who were compelled to deliver milk up to school time, who ran errands during the whole of the dinner hour, and who sold newspapers or vended flowers up to midnight. He would be happy to help the Government in any effort to put a stop to such a condition.

He had, in his own experience, known of boys dragged up at three in the morning to go to the flower market at Covent Garden, who got back to the East End of London at nine o'clock, who then went to school and fell asleep on their desks; who ran errands during the whole of their dinner hour; who having slept again all through afternoon school, had sold flowers or newspapers right up to ten o'clock at night. Another boy at Marylebone, now unhappily dead, occupied the whole of his leisure time measuring corpses as assistant to an undertaker. Anything more shocking could scarcely be imagined. The whole thing had filled him with shame and indignation. The Government must, of course, mix up the desirable with the possible. We could not move fast in this matter, but, on the contrary, very slowly. He did not know whether this Bill had not got its eye rather on the possible than on the desirable, but small as it was, the Bill was before the House, and he hoped the Second Reading would be taken as soon as possible, and having got that, the Bill might go to a Grand Committee, where a few suggestions could be made to the Home Secretary which might strengthen it. These he would suggest later.

MR. MIDDLEMORE (Birmingham N.): I should like to join in the chorus of congratulations that has risen from both sides of the House, on the prospects of a Bill so much needed, and which, when we see it we shall, I think, admit will do much good. I myself have met children going to their work at 3 and 3.30 in the morning, and, as has been pointed out, they go to school exhausted and spiritless and unable to work. I do not think it is fully realised how much the physical standard of the country is deteriorating by the miserable conditions in which these children are brought up. And if things are allowed to go on in this way, we may become a degenerate nation. Let me illustrate my meaning. It was my duty some time ago to be in attendance at a Charity; a boy called to see me, he looked about fourteen years old, was very slouching in his gait and aggressive in his demeanour. I tapped him smartly under the chin and said, "Hold up your head like a man," when he replied "What are you hitting me for, I am a man and I am married." That was a striking instance of degeneracy. The man ought to have been several inches taller, several inches broader, and he ought not to have been married. I hope this Bill will give to the child some of its rights, and, among others, the right to enjoy some of its life.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): The House of Commons has listened to a chorus of congratulations to the right hon. Gentleman on the little measure he has introduced. I agree with those congratulations, but wish to supplement them with a word of advice. I would venture to suggest that in certain quarters outside the House this Bill may be received with a good deal of opposition, and I appeal to the Home Secretary to see that between this and the passing of the Bill into law it is not whittled away, and, what is more, I would urge him to strengthen it.

As to the merits of the Bill, take the proposal to interfere with street trading. The Bill is to give local authorities power to regulate street trading up to the age of sixteen, and to prohibit it in the case of children under eleven. So far so good. But I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that a great number of tobacconists, milkmen, and newsagents will try to reduce the age for prohibition from eleven to seven or nine, while many will say, "Why interfere with street trading up to sixteen years of age?" The opposition to this excellent proposal will come from people who have more weight in these matters than they ought to have, viz., the newspaper proprietors, who are interested in taking the vitals out of this Bill. I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman not to budge from sixteen, and if he wants a reason why it should be raised to eighteen, or even twenty, let him go to some of the newspaper offices, within fifty yards of Fleet Street, when the editions of the evening papers are coming out. He will there see from 50 to 200 boys fighting literally like beasts for their parcels of papers and behaving in a disgraceful and scandalous manner. I am not blaming the boys—the stress of competition is so keen, and the conditions under which they have to earn their bread are so demoralising and degrading. Let him have a chat with the City policeman, who, with a cane, is kept outside and sometimes inside these offices, as to the way in which these lads are treated in order to provide some "Yellow Press" proprietors with West-end mansions and high dividends, and he will find reasons why the age should be higher than sixteen.

As to the parents, I would warn the right hon. Gentleman against the "poor lone widow." She will doubtless be invoked on the Grand Committee. Fancy pictures will be drawn of the lady who does a little charing, alternating with some of the duties of Mrs. Gamp, who has two or three children, one selling flowers at Victoria Station, another selling newspapers at Charing Cross, and another who has to be up with the milk at four o'clock in the morning or selling newspapers until twelve o'clock at night. Let the right hon. Gentleman "beware of widders," and take no notice of the lady who too frequently lives out of the labours of the children in order to get more gin than is good for her health and to keep later hours than are desirable.

Above all, let the right hon. Gentleman remember what the physique, morals, and language of these boys are. I read the other day with surprise and pain an excellent article by General Morris, Governor of Woolwich Garrison, confirming the recruiting statistics from Lancashire and elsewhere, from which it appears that out of 11,000 recruits from 3,000 to 4,000 were rejected as unfit. What is the reason? It is that these boys in their early years live in overcrowded slums and rooms; their years of school life are not sufficient to teach them to live and behave properly; the temptation for them to be driven out by their fathers, who are often out of work, or by their mothers who are not as good mothers as they might be, is so strong that when the boys are over the school age they earn a little money by selling newspapers, holding horses, and so forth. I know nothing more demoralising to a man and to the unskilled labour market than casual labour, but its effect on boys and girls under sixteen is infinitely worse. Some of the newspapers will oppose it; some of the parents will obstruct it; and shopkeepers will say that it goes too far. I ask the right hon. Gentleman to stiffen his back on this matter, and, if possible, to bring the industrial schools and private houses in which cruel cases of over-work are proved within the purview of the Bill. We have hundreds of men and women out of employment simply because their children are allowed to undersell them in the labour market; by which practice the children are demoralised, and the rate of wages for adult labour lowered.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) suggested that the Home Secretary should, if possible, bring the employment of children for begging purposes within the scope of the Bill. It was not really an employment, but it was one of the most demoralising uses to which children could be put, and it might escape attention unless special attention were drawn to it.

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) desired to join in the chorus of thanks to the right hon. Gentleman for bringing in this Bill, which he hoped would receive the unanimous support of the House. As to the selling of newspapers by children, he thought there would be less ground for complaint on that score if the Home Secretary would bring in another Bill prohibiting the publication of betting news.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester) urged the right hon. Gentleman to be careful in his definition of "local authority." That would be an important point in the measure, because many small places employed children to as large an extent as the larger towns. He hoped, too, that it would be made compulsory on local authorities to put the Bill in operation, otherwise many bodies would be only too glad to avoid the trouble and, in some cases, the unpopularity of putting the Bill in force. The Bill would be held in quite sufficient restraint in its administration by the magistrates, so that there need be no fear of making it too strict.

"Bill to make better provision for regulating the employment of children," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas and Mr. Cochrane.

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.

"To make better provision for regulating the employment of children," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 77.]

MUNICIPAL TRADING.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient that a Select Committee of this House be appointed to join with a Committee of the Lords to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I do not intend to oppose, much less to obstruct, this proposal, but there are one or two remarks I desire to make. In the first place, I object to the title "Municipal Trading." It has become a common expression, but really it is a misnomer, and is not even in accord with the wording in the body of the proposal. "Municipal powers" or "works" would be much more appropriate, while "Municipal trading" is, to some extent, a pre-judgment of the question at issue. Then, if it was intended to propose the re-appointment of this Committee, it is to be regretted that so long a delay has taken place since it previously sat. There ought to have been more continuity in regard to its action and, for my part, I regret exceedingly that the sittings were suspended, because the municipal evidence vindicated in the highest degree the municipal action which has been taken, and had produced a strong impression on the minds of the members of the Committee, and I do not believe that the municipalities shrink in the slightest degree from further investigation.

Of course, private enterprise is the basis of our commercial and industrial system, and no one would wish to place any restriction upon it. On the contrary, every encouragement the law can give ought to be given to its development. But I would point out that whatever restrictions have been placed upon it, have been imposed by this House. Take the case of the Electric Lighting Acts. It has been said, and with some truth, that there have been restrictions with reference to the general adoption of electric lighting, but that has been done by this House; just as, in the same way, one may refer to the housing of the poor, as regards which this House gave a mandate to the municipalities, but, on the other hand, placed very great practical obstacles in the way of the performance of that public duty. The municipalities have done much to carry out the duties entrusted to them, in some cases under very exceptional difficulties; but admitting all that, there is still a great deal more for municipal activity to undertake.

Anyone who is familiar with the history of this country during the past century must attribute its progress and its enterprise in a very great degree to municipal action. Take the work of the municipalities for the public health. There are no Acts of Parliament which form a more splendid code than the Public Health Acts. They have been built up by municipal enterprise, through local experience, and even municipal experiment, and if at times mistakes had been made, they have been mistakes which were the forerunners of progress; because experience, if utilised as it ought to be, may be gathered from mistakes as well as from successes. On the whole, however, the mistakes have been few and the successes have been many and great. What have the municipalities done for the people in supplying the necessaries of life, such as pure water, pure light and pure air? The results have been of the greatest advantage to this country, and I am sure this House will never overlook the indebtedness of the country to such municipal action. And it is simply absurd to call such great local and national work mere municipal trading, even from the trading point of view, for it has made the national health and strength, and so the national wealth. Nevertheless, though I think it ridiculously unnecessary, I have not a word to say against the inquiry, because I believe it will result in vindication; but I should like to add one word about the composition of the Committee. I appeal to the Government in the strongest way that they will at least have the fairness to carefully consider the composition of the tribunal which is to try this question. I say this, because I complained that in the case of the preceding Committee there were many upon it who had not had any practical municipal experience. There was only one, or at most two, Members who were really municipal representatives; and I venture to say that no one can pass a fair and just judgment on the action and work of the municipalities unless he has had practical experience in their City and Town Councils as Mayor, Councillor, or otherwise. Notwithstanding the absence of that qualification, I admit there was much fairness; and I believe that many previous adverse and even hostile convictions were overcome by irrefutable and conclusive evidence, but I do appeal to the Government in the strongest terms that they will put on this Committee real, practical representatives of the municipalities. I think if this course is taken, good will result; that force will be given by the local authorities to the judgment of the Committee; that the result of the inquiry will be beneficial; and that as regards great public undertakings as well as private enterprise, which are really not in conflict and which ought to be reconciled, competition will be as far as possible avoided, so that both may work for the welfare of the country; or, where competition is advisedly set up, either by the one or the other, in the public interest, it will be so conducted as to conduce to that paramount end.

Sir Albert Rollit.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester): When this Committee was originally proposed some few years ago I opposed it; and I oppose it now on the ground that its effect, and what I fear is its object, is to harass, discredit, annoy, and obstruct corporation work. I have confidence in trading by municipalities. Who are supporting this proposal? It is supported by the professional classes, bankers and lawyers who are interested in it, and above all by company promoters. The revelations which have been submitted to us during the past twelve months by some of the organs of the Press in this country are sufficient in themselves to deter the Government from pursuing this policy of irritation and annoyance against the great popularly elected, and, in the main, economically managed local bodies. [An HON. MEMBER: Oh!] I am speaking of bodies on which I have taken a part; and, therefore, I know what I am talking about. I am not speaking of the City of London Council, but of the great corporations throughout the country, which are in the main above suspicion, and which are managed by men who give most valuable time and experience, without fee or reward, for the benefit of their fellow citizens. I think the reappointment of this Committee can only annoy the municipalities; and therefore I will divide the House against the Motion.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): The hon. Member who has just spoken stated that this Motion is supported by bankers, lawyers and company promoters. I am neither a banker nor a lawyer, nor, as far as I know, a company promoter; but I wish to say a few words on behalf of a class not yet mentioned, that is, the unfortunate ratepayers. The increase in rates all over the country during the last ten years has been something astounding. In our great towns that enormous increase has seriously hampered manufacturers. It hampers most seriously the railway companies; and, although I do not expect much sympathy for them, because unfortunately they are looked upon as fair game, still they are entitled to consideration. Many persons have their savings invested in these enterprises, and depend almost entirely on them for their subsistence. My only complaint about this Committee is that it does not go far enough. I do not consider it is an attack on the great corporations of this country to appoint a Committee to investigate the manner in which they carry on their trading. If they carry on their trading successfully, and for the benefit of the community, they have nothing to fear from investigation; but if they carry on their trading, as I believe they do in a great many instances, at the cost of the ratepayers, then the ratepayers have good reason to complain.

My only complaint about the action of the Government is that they did not take a broader view of the question. They are merely taking in hand one side of a very large question, and are not dealing boldly with the other side. It must be obvious to anyone who has taken the trouble to inquire into the statistics, that the manufacturers of this country cannot continue to conduct their business in large towns if the rates are so high as to seriously cripple them. After all the manufacturer, although it may be fashionable to scoff at him, is very often the largest ratepayer in the town. Not only that, but he employs those who live in the town; and if he is driven out you will not only inflict injury on him but also on those who reside within the area. I hope that my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade, who is in charge of this Motion, will not lose sight of this larger question. We ought to consider how best this great increase in the rates can be dealt with, and whether ratepayers are getting value for their money. If they are not some other restrictions on municipal trading should be imposed.

MR. VICARY GIBBS (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): The hon. Member for South Islington was very coy about the words "municipal trading," and he suggested one or two other synonyms which would suit him better. But what have municipalities done? I will give a few instances—cold air storage, ice manufacture, concert rooms, hotels, Turkish baths, cycle tracks, and brass foundries. What is trading if that is not trading? The hon. Member also said that there were other openings for municipal activity. Let me give a few of the proposed developments. He had seen suggestions that municipal trading should be further developed so as to take in pawnbroking, banking, running public-houses—[OPPOSITION cheers]—fire insurance, and retail coal trade. That evidently pleased hon. Members opposite. He thought, therefore, it was important that they should have a Committee, or rather a Royal Commission, to inquire into the question. He considered that the matter was much more likely to be properly dealt with by a Royal Commission than by a Committee of Members either of this or the other House of Parliament.

Referring to the financial aspect of the question, he spoke of the rapid rate at which the local indebtedness of the country had grown during the last twenty-five years, and more especially during the last ten years. It was all very well for them to try to reduce the national debt, but if local debt was to develop as it had been doing there would not be much advantage gained. He asked the House to remember that local debt was not under the purview of the control of Parliament in the same way as the national debt. It was a matter for serious consideration that while during the last twenty-five years we had reduced the national debt £140,000,000, local loans had been increased by £201,000,000 in the same period. The indebtedness of local authorities was now estimated at £330,000,000 or £10 per head of the population. These were startling figures, well worthy of the consideration of any Committee that might be appointed, and they ought to give pause to any thoughtful person not to engage in an enterprise where competition would be with Corporations having the rates behind them. The way in which local indebtedness was being piled up was one of the most serious dangers which the community had to face. He did not deny for a moment that municipalities had done a great deal of good in the country, but he held that they had made many dangerous experiments, and that their action must tend in the future, if carried into all departments of trade, to paralyse private enterprise.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): My hon. friend has discussed the question whether municipal trading is a good thing or a bad thing. The question before us is not whether municipal trading is good or bad, or whether a Committee should be appointed to inquire into municipal trading, but whether the Committee which was appointed two years ago should be reappointed to inquire into a question of the greatest possible importance. From my own experience at the Board of Trade, I think it is extremely desirable that the Board should have the assistance of a careful inquiry by a Committee to enable us to come to decisions on proposals made in provisional orders for the extension of municipal trading. For instance, the Board has hitherto refused to admit into provisional orders provisions to permit municipal authorities to manufacture electrical fittings, and that is one of the points upon which the Board would be glad to have the advice of a Select Committee. I do not wish to detain the House longer at the present moment, but I do earnestly urge that the House should allow this question to be inquired into.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said he was very sorry that he could not respond to the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman, and particularly after the speech he had made. The right hon. Gentleman could not have cited a more unfortunate illustration for facilitating the passing of this Resolution than the one he mentioned in regard to the supply of electrical fittings. On that matter he ventured respectfully to say that the Board of Trade ought not to seek guidance from a Committee of this House. The proper body to decide whether electrical fittings should be made and sold was the local authority that undertook that particular enterprise. When the President of the Board of Trade asked that a Committee should be appointed in order that his Department might be guided, it appeared to him that the right hon. Gentleman revealed that the Resolution was a flank attack against municipal authorities managing their own business in their own way, and consequently he was strongly opposed to it. What was the Resolution? The President of the Board of Trade obviously had not given it that attention he should have done. The Resolution said—

> "That it is expedient that a Select Committee of this House be appointed to join with a Committee of the Lords to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction."

All the local authorities in this country acted under statutes and Provisional Orders which were passed by this House. The House had already sufficient supervision of the work done by the local authorities, and what was the reason assigned for the appointment of this Committee? The mere fact that you had a Committee two years ago which did its work, as suggested by the hon. Member for South Islington, was no reason why it should be reappointed unless there was necessity.

There was no fact alleged or evidence produced about dereliction of duty by any of the local authorities to warrant this investigation. Corruption, mismanagement, extravagance, or loss to the ratepayers had not been alleged. On the contrary, all the evidence went to show that the local authorities, in regard to gas for example, managed their enterprises in such a way as to supply the consumer cheaper than private companies could do, while at the same time making substantial surpluses which were used for the purpose of lightening the burdens of the poor and reducing the charges to manufacturers. For whose purpose was this Committee demanded? The facts did not warrant it, and no section of the ratepayers had asked the Board of Trade to set up a Committee. Had the London County Council or the municipality of Manchester, Liverpool or Glasgow demanded an investigation into municipal trading? Not a single one. On the contrary, outside *The Times* and a few company directors, whose policy on municipal trading was equal to their incapacity to manage their own affairs, there was no tittle or shadow of a public demand for this inquiry.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

TRADES UNIONS.

* MR. BELL (Derby), on a point of order desired to know whether the Motion would be in order seeing that there was a Bill down for a future day dealing with the same subject.

MR. SPEAKER said he was about to call the hon. Member's attention to the fact there were several Bills on this subject, and, as the Motion was couched in wide terms, he was about to ask the hon. Member what matters outside the scope of these Bills he proposed to discuss, and whether he would modify his Motion so as not to include their subject-matter.

MR. PEMBERTON (Sunderland) said he did not intend to trench upon those Bills in the observations he proposed to make, but it certainly seemed to him there was ground for some inquiry.

*MR. SPEAKER said it was not enough, in order to avoid anticipating a Bill, for the hon. Member to contend that the question which was raised by a Bill was one on which there should be previous inquiry. The hon. Gentleman must avoid all discussion on the subject-matters of those Bills. If the hon Gentleman said he could make his Motion without touching the subject-matter of those Bills that was another matter.

MR. PEMBERTON said that was his impression. The position he had taken up had been misunderstood, and he had been met with a good deal of opposition from opposite quarters. Those who represented the employers considered he was bringing a Motion which might injure their view of the law, whilst hon. Members who represented Trades Unions thought he was trying to burk discussion on the Bills which would come before the House in due time. He should, he thought, be able to show good reason for asking the House to agree that a Committee should be appointed to inquire into the state of the law as it affected Trades Unions, without attempting to allude to any of the points to which the Bill of the right hon. Member for Forest of Dean and others alluded. His first point was that the legal status obtained by Trades Unions was of great importance to the country and to the House, quite irrespective of party. Everybody who knew anything of social and economic life in this country, looked upon it as a matter of great importance to the country that Trades Unions should not be in the uncertain position that they were in to-day. Trades Unions had become more and more important from time to time, and had now obtained a quasi-legal *status*. Then came the great combinations of employers. Considering the importance of trade in this country and the fact that the whole prosperity of the country depended upon the operations of trade, and that that was involved in the relations of the Trades Unions and the Employers Unions, it seemed to him *primâ facie* that that was good reason for asking for an inquiry to settle what exactly was the position of the law, if there was a law, with regard to Trades Unions.

The three grounds on which he based his request were, first, the uncertainty as to the liability of Unions and as to what they could do, as well as the uncertainty of the rights of Employers Unions. That in itself he thought justified his request for inquiry. Such inquiry would be in the interests of the general public as much as of the combinations themselves. Secondly, he urged the inequality of the position of Trades Unions and Employers Unions as a reason for inquiry. That inequality was not only possible with regard to their legal positions, but also from their general positions. He pointed out that in cases of dispute the workmen risked more than the employers, because the employers could shift their business and get rid of the difficulty in that way, but that this course was not open to the Trades Unions. The chief ground on which he had based his argument was the natural and broad one of public policy. Trades Unions were a very important body in the country. Everything, he thought, should be done, as far as reasonably could, to consider their position, and all that the country or the House could desire was that they should obey the law. It would surely be a wise course to try to make their position clear. In asking for an inquiry, he could not see that he was in any way asking for an amendment of the law. He only asked for an inquiry into the state of the law as it was, and he hoped the Government would show favour to such an inquiry. He begged to move.

MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire), in rising to second the Motion, congratulated his hon. friend on the extremely skilful way in which he had proposed it. He himself felt the sword of Damocles suspended by a hair over his head, and a sense of extreme peril in the task he had undertaken in seconding the Motion. He contended that the general law relating to Trades Unions was in a crude condition. It was law made by the Judges rather than by the House. He was far from wishing to be understood to object to what was called Judge-made law, for some of the Judge-made law was of the very best we had. He instanced the Merchant Law, made not only by judges but juries as well, and the Law of Partnerships, which was made in a like manner from time to time until at last it reached a stage, as the result of an inquiry by a Committee of this House, when it was possible to legislate upon it. The difficulty the House was in when it approached legislation which related to labour lay in the uncertainty of the material. It was essential that there should be before the House some clear view of what the law was before they could possibly proceed effectively to amend it. Therefore it was eminently desirable to his mind that the Government should initiate some form of inquiry on this subject. Speaking for himself he thought the Government would probably act wisely in going a little short of this Motion—if they confined themselves to asking for a report on the actual state of things rather than for suggestions as to a remedy. He would prefer that an inquiry of this sort should be conducted in a dry scientific light, which could only be done by those engaged divesting themselves of the very smallest tinge of opinion on one side or the other; and he submitted to the House that the condition of things with which they were all familiar made it essential and desirable that they should have some authoritative statement as to the material with which they had to deal. He begged leave to second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Committee be appointed to inquire into the existing law as it affects Trades Unions, and report what, if any, alterations should be made therein."—(*Mr. Pemberton.*)

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): I acknowledge at once the difficulty in which I am placed in following two such eminent Members of the Bar. That difficulty is almost insurmountable, and I rise not so much to discuss in any way the merits or demerits of the proposal of my hon. friend the Member for Sunderland as to submit an Amendment which, even assuming the ground taken by my hon. friend to be sound, I believe will remove the ambiguity involved in his Motion. All the laws affecting Trades Unions had their foundations in a preliminary inquiry. That was the case with the Royal Commission presided over by the Lord Chief Justice Earle, and which sat from 1867 to 1869 and with the subsequent Royal Commission of 1874. If we are to have any legislation affecting the Trades Unions of this country then I submit that before such legislation is proposed we ought to have some inquiry to enlighten us as to what is the actual condition of the law. It is admitted that there is uncertainty in regard to that which should be removed. If the Motion of the hon. Member for Sunderland is passed in the form in which it now stands it might merely mean that the inquiry should be made by a Committee of this House, because my hon. friend simply says "a Committee." I am quite sure that the hon. and learned Gentleman who seconded the Motion is the last person in the world to recommend a Select Committee of this House. It is not for me to argue what would probably happen if there was such a Select Committee. The hon. Gentleman referred to the bias which some people might have who had read, for instance, Mr. Sydney Webb's book; but whatever view we take on this question we all admit that a Select Committee is not either a proper or a good tribunal to deal with this subject. Therefore that ambiguity should be removed from my hon. friend's Motion.

Whether it would be better to appoint a Departmental Committee of experts or a Royal Commission is a matter worthy of consideration, and for debate. I think a Departmental Committee is very often apt, to judge from the experience of various such Committees, to labour the official view of the Department. I do not say that the employers' view of labour questions is necessarily hostile to that of the workmen. I believe it is not the case in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred; and that the two interests are so combined and conjoined that it is impossible, except with a malicious intent, to divide the one from the other. If that be so I submit that a Departmental Committee would be by no means a good tribunal to deal with this question. So far as I know the only other method left is a Royal Commission. I know it is suggested sometimes that Royal Commissions are often appointed for the purpose of delaying legislation, but if there is any guilt in the matter it is shared equally by both sides of the House. I am sure that my hon. friend will agree that this House should thoroughly understand a question before it attempts to legislate upon it. My hon. friend holds decided views on various questions, and he would not suggest that the House should embark on legislation on a subject which he himself did not understand. It is admitted, then, that we do not know exactly where the law stands, and there is no other method, which I can imagine, of affording us the information we require than by an inquiry by a Royal Commission. Therefore I beg to move the omission of the word "Committee" in the Motion of my hon. friend, and the insertion of the word "Commission." I use the word "Commission" advisedly, because I do not know whether technically I would be carrying the Government with me if this suggestion of mine is agreed to.

I do not think it is necessary that there should be a limit to the number of Members on the Commission, but at the same time I do not think it necessary it should be a large Commission. On the contrary it would be very much better if all contending interests were excluded from this body, and that there should be included only those competent to form a judgment from a legal and a common-sense point of view. I know it may be urged that we cannot appeal to the judges for any assistance in this inquiry, because they would not be able to spare the time for this additional work, although I cannot imagine any work in which the judges could be more properly engaged than in settling a difficulty of this kind. Whether the Commission should be large or small it is not for me to say; but I wish to remove any ambiguity in the original Motion, and to make it quite clear that the inquiry should be made not by a Committee, but by a Commission.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'Committee' and insert the word 'Commission' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Galloway.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Committee' stand part of the Question."

*MR. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside): I have an Amendment on the Paper to the Motion of my hon. friend the Member for Sunderland, but I am bound to say that in putting down that Amendment I based it on the view to which the hon. and learned Member for Haddington has given expression. I had had the hope of gratifying the ambition of hatching the egg which the hon. and learned Member has laid, but I feel that now he has cut the ground from under my feet. I will confine myself to one or two general observations. In the first place there is a point on which I think we all agree. It is certain that the law as it stands at present is obscure, and that it is suspected that the law at present is partial. The obscurity ought to be made clear, and the absolute fairness and equality of the law ought to be demonstrated without doubt or cavil. Whatever view we may take of labour disputes I think all parties who have to enter such disputes have a right to know where they stand, and have a right to meet each other on equal terms. I do not believe that Parliament will ever give any privilege to one class and deny it to another. [Ironical cheers from the OPPOSITION Benches.] Certainly Parliament ought not to do so; and it ought to be absolutely clear that if unfortunate labour disputes do take place both sides should meet to settle their differences in a fair field, and with no favour. As to the composition of whatever body is appointed to investigate this matter, I believe there is a distinct prejudice against a Royal Commission constituted in the ordinary way. It is found that when a large Commission is appointed, representing every kind of interest, and when that Commission sits over a long period, hearing every kind of evidence from every quarter, an impression is produced on the public mind that it has been appointed to shelve the matter. I deprecate that that should be the case on this occasion. I think that whatever body is appointed to inquire into this question should be small, expert, and impartial. [AN HON. MEMBER on the Opposition Benches: "Why not appoint the House of Lords?"] The appointment of the Commission ought to be made on the assumption that real business is meant, and that the state of the law should be so settled that no Party will be able to say that they are aggrieved, or that all are not placed on a footing of equality.

* MR. BELL: I think this must be an evening of short speeches. These must necessarily be compressed in consequence of the narrow lines on which we shall have to confine ourselves in discussing the matter before the House. I certainly feel gratified with the hon. Member for Sunderland for the sympathetic manner in which he introduced his Motion; but all I heard fall from his lips seemed to be arguments why his Motion should not be carried. They are arguments for the Bill set down for Second Reading on 8th May, and everything covered therein. I have heard remarks to-night in favour of a Committee, a Commission, or something else, to inquire into the state of the law, and, at the same time, each of the speakers has admitted that the law is in an unsatisfactory state. That is the reason why Bills have been introduced into the House for the specific purpose of putting the law on a satisfactory footing; but if this Motion is adopted to-night it will prejudice the chances of any of these Bills being carried, for it will be said that a Royal Commission or a Select Committee is inquiring into the subject matter of the Bill, and until it has reported the judgment of the House must be withheld, and hon. Members will not be inclined to give the Bill their support. It is all very well for hon. Gentlemen to offer us their sympathy, and I am obliged to them for it. But last year we had a Motion before the House in which we wanted the appointment of a Committee on practically the same lines as that proposed by the hon. Member for Sunderland, that the Government should do something to codify the law so that employers and workmen, lawyers and judges might know how to deal with these matters. On that occasion hon. Members refused to support it. Perhaps I am not right or fair in suggesting that if we were not in a favourable position for bringing our Bill before the House, we should not have had a Motion of this description at all.

MR. PEMBERTON: So far as I am concerned that is not my intention; and, as a matter of fact, I supported the Motion last year.

*MR. BELL: I fully accept the hon. and learned Member's explanation, and I am much obliged to him for the support he gave us on that occasion. For once, perhaps, I am in agreement with the employers. I received to-day a circular from them asking me, along with others, to oppose this Motion.

MR. GALLOWAY: I was in no way interested in the circular.

*MR. BELL: I do not suggest that the hon. Member was interested in it. I simply referred to the fact that such a circular had been sent to me. The arguments adduced by the hon. Member for Manchester are really arguments against the Motion and in favour of the Bill. I know the hon. Member for Manchester holds very different views about Trades Unions from what I do, and that is perhaps really the reason why he wants a Commission, or the House of Lords, to inquire into this matter. However, the action of hon. Members in the House, in refusing us support when we asked last year for a Committee of Inquiry into the state of the law in order that it might be codified, has raised a storm in the country which has had the effect of inducing hon. Members opposite to support this Motion and to show that they are in favour of something being done. The Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, which represents 1,500,000 of the workers of this country, has made up its mind on this subject, and we are going to test the opinion and sympathies of this House by bringing forward our Bill on May 8. I ask the House, and especially those who sympathise, or even say that they sympathise, with the Trade Unions, to vote against both the Motion and the Amendment, and to be in their places on May 8 to give their support to the Bill.

MR. LAWSON WALTON (Leeds, S.): I would like to say a word on this Motion, associating myself for the moment with my hon. friend behind me, and at the same time associating myself with the hon. Member for Sunderland. I do not think that the views of these hon. Gentlemen are necessarily inconsistent. Personally I share profoundly the opinion expressed on all sides of the House that the existing state of the law is extremely unsatisfactory. I also share the feeling of my hon. friend behind me that it ought to be amended at the earliest possible date. But I am not so sanguine as he seems to be that the 8th of May will see an alteration made in the Statute Law. In all probability the extremely slow operation of the legislative machinery of this House will involve the elapse of a considerable time before the necessary changes are introduced. But, in the meantime, it is surely of the utmost importance that we should ascertain definitely what the state of the law is before proceeding to legislative action. I defy any lawyer to expound the law at present in clear terms. Before we can amend it, or before we can consider the rational application of the proposed changes, we should know the specific subject-matter to which these changes are intended to apply. I trust that within the limits of the very narrow groove which you, Mr. Speaker, have announced in reference to this Motion, I shall be able to indicate what should be the subject which this House should refer to a Committee or Commission.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. and learned Member has been really for the last five minutes arguing the question of the Bill. I hope he will not pursue that course.

MR. LAWSON WALTON: Of course I accept your views, Mr. Speaker, but it is difficult to justify a reference to a Committee without, in some measure, trenching on the subject-matter of the Bill. I think I might be in order, if it is the fact that the state of the law we propose to change is uncertain, in arguing that there should be some preparatory inquiry to ascertain what exactly the law is.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is repeating the same thing, although I quite appreciate the difficulty he is in.

Mr. LAWSON WALTON said he supported this Motion in the hope that the legislation proposed might be final, and that the result would not be a further conflict between the constructions of the Statute and the views of the judges, and he trusted that there would not be further confusion between Statute Law and judge-made laws. He thought all this might be avoided by some form of preliminary inquiry.

Mr. BROADHURST (Leicester) said that all those who were specially interested in Trades Union legislation could not view with favour the Motion made by the hon. Member for Sunderland. What the Labour Party contended for was that their difficulties were well known and their dangers well defined, and that they had a remedy sufficient for the purpose in the form of a Bill which would shortly be introduced. Therefore an inquiry, rightly or wrongly, could only be used as an excuse to evade a direct issue on the 8th of May of what was required. Holding those views it was impossible to agree in any measure whatever with any view or policy that would lead to delay of even an hour on this great question. The Tory Government in 1874 found itself in a similar position. In the year 1872 he himself was in a responsible position, and he remembered that the Government were sorely pressed, and indeed oppressed with the operation of the Law of Conspiracy and the Law of Contract. In the General Election which took place in February, 1874, they heckled every candidate in the country on the issue which came out at that General Election. The overwhelming majority of members returned in February, 1874, were steeped in pledges in favour of the views of the Labour Party at that time. When the Government was formed in the year 1874 by Mr. Disraeli, a similar Motion to the one now made by the hon. Member for Sunderland led to the appointment of a Commission against the clear declarations of all parties that the House should proceed to legislation.

Their case now was that there was no necessity in their judgment for this inquiry because the facts were before all parties, and any willing draftsman wishing to relieve both sides of this dilemma could do so at very short notice. The Commission he had referred to was appointed, and the hon. Member for Morpeth was invited to join the Commission, but he refused. A number of the leading Labour leaders refused to give evidence before that Commission, and the Government was forced to bring the inquiry to a close. After that, a draftsman within a few weeks drew a Bill, both with regard to conspiracy and the law of contract, which, if not entirely satisfying all the demands of the Labour Party, was so well grounded that it satisfied the wants of the Labour world for a great number of years. If the House now agreed to the appointment of this Committee it would be taken purely as an evasion, and as a means of avoiding the expression of the opinion of the House on a direct issue, and all such policies were undesirable. It was on those grounds that they viewed with disfavour this proposal, because they thought it would be taken as a way of escape from saying directly "aye" or "no" to a straight question which would be put to Parliament on the 8th of May. Therefore they were bound to oppose this Motion, and all well-wishers of Trades Unions, and all who desired that peace should reign between Capital and Labour in this country, ought to oppose this Motion. He held strong opinions upon this subject, and he sincerely hoped that both sides would join in rejecting this suggestion for an unlimited delay in legislation, because legislation upon this question was a most urgent need, in order to protect the interests of hundreds and thousands of the workers of this country.

*Mr. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said that nobody was asking for delay in regard to this question, and he did not think legislation of this sort would be hastened by speeches made in such a spirit as that which had just been delivered by the hon. Member for Leicester. [Opposition cries of "Oh, oh!"] The time had gone by when either the House of Commons or the public outside could be driven into any such course by the use of minatory and brow-beating language. He had a strong preference for the appointment of a Royal Commission rather than a Select Committee. There was a much more difficult question before the legislature in the year 1867, when a Royal Commission was appointed. At that time Parliament appointed a strictly impartial Committee, and they recommended legislation which was strong enough to last for a generation. There was another precedent in 1893, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife appointed a Commission to deal with certain riots arising out of a coal strike in that year. If in the present case they got from a Commission appointed a report so luminous and valuable as was produced on that occasion it would be a great advantage, and he did not think any more delay than was absolutely necessary need be feared. He hoped if there was to be an inquiry it would be by a Royal Commission, and that it would not be constituted by the discredited method of giving representation to those contending parties from whom it was impossible to get an impartial judgment.

*MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said he was sorry the hon. Member for Sheffield had introduced words which were calculated to give offence to hon. Members. He did not think anything had been said to justify the remarks which the hon. Member for Sheffield had made, and as far as he was personally concerned he should endeavour to keep from remarks which would give offence to anybody. What they desired was that the opinion of the House should be given on this question. The employers were perfectly satisfied in their own opinion as to what the law was, but the workpeople, so far as the decisions which had been given from time to time, were not satisfied, and they were anxious to get away altogether from the legal decisions which had been given within the past few years. They wished to lay clearly before the country the position which they desired to be in——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! If I allow the hon. Gentleman to proceed on these lines, I shall be inviting a discussion which I have ruled to be out of order.

*MR. SHACKLETON said he would bow to Mr. Speaker's ruling, and what he was going to say was that they did not feel that the Committee of this House, chosen as suggested from those not interested in the case either on one side or the other, would be of any advantage at all. They were also of opinion that the appointment of a Royal Commission meant delay—certainly of months and might be years—and he appealed to the House, for the sake of peace in the country, and in order to be able to conduct any future disputes in a proper manner, that this matter should be settled by Parliament as soon as possible. He thought the House would be wise in accepting the advice of the employers on the one side and of the representatives of Labour on the other side. The employers distinctly advised that this question should be settled, not that night, but on the 8th of May, and the Coal Miners Association advised the same thing, and these two associations represented 75 per cent. of the employers of this country. He appealed to the Government not to give any encouragement to this Motion, because he felt sure the people would take it as an attempt to delay legislation and nothing else. He hoped the House would defeat the Motion.

MR. WHITE RIDLEY (Staleybridge) said he sincerely hoped the Government would see their way to grant a small Commission. He thought they might take it that it was the general sense of the House and of the country that the law upon this question was in a state of chaos, but they were not all agreed that the bringing of a Bill before the House was the best way to remedy this state of chaos. It was possible that a small Commission would be able to put the state of the law into some coherent code, and that would probably be the best way of settling the question, which they all admitted was of a very complicated character. The Home Secretary had stated that the Government would not shrink from making an inquiry if they thought it was necessary, and therefore he thought they might take it that the Government was not entirely averse to the principle of an inquiry. In order that they might arrive at a fair judgment and come to a decision he thought that some such inquiry as that proposed by his hon. friend the Member for Sunderland was absolutely necessary.

MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.): Without any disrespect to the hon. Gentlemen who have taken part in this debate, I venture to record my own opinion, which is that I have rarely heard a more unprofitable discussion—unprofitable not from any fault on the part of those hon.

Members who have shared in it, and not from any lack of interest on the part of the House upon a subject which, if we had been able to approach it, would have engrossed universal attention; but unprofitable owing to the conditions under which the debate is carried out, which preclude us from discussing even the subject matter. We cannot approach even the outskirts of the subject; our tongues are tied and our hands are fettered, and we are really beating the air to no purpose. [AN HON. MEMBER: Ploughing the sands.] I agree with the suggestion that at the earliest possible moment this discussion should come to an end. It appears to me that neither the representatives of the employers nor of the employed are anxious for the passing of the Motion which has been suggested. For my own part I agree with my hon. and learned friend behind me that there is, at any rate, a considerable area of the existing law which is covered by recent decisions with obscurity and confusion; and, as I have said before, I do not believe that any lawyer who has studied the decisions of the Courts could advise with any confidence in any given state of circumstances what Acts were legal and what were illegal, and what constituted a conspiracy and what did not. But there are certain defects of the law which are patent and obvious and capable of a clear remedy which have been revealed by recent decisions. There is the law of picketing, for instance, and some branches of the law of agency.

*THE SPEAKER: I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that the points enumerated by him are specifically dealt with in the Bills which have been introduced.

MR. ASQUITH: I have unconsciously illustrated my own contention that it is impossible to discuss this subject with any profit under existing conditions, because the moment you approach a concrete fact you are pulled up and you cannot get on. I would strongly deprecate any Commission or Committee of inquiry as likely to be relied on as an argument against immediate legislation; and since it is clear that neither of the interests concerned desire the inquiry I appeal to the mover to withdraw his Motion.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CARSON, Dublin University): I only rise to re-echo what was said by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and I agree with him that whatever importance there may be attached to this Motion if we were free to discuss it—and I am far from saying that if we were free there might not be a great deal to be said in favour of the course which is suggested —I still do think that on the matter introduced by my hon. friend the mover, which is one of extreme importance, we do find ourselves almost in a ludicrous position in trying to come to any conclusion. What is the position in which we are placed? The Motion suggests that we should ask for a Committee or a Commission to examine into the existing law as it affects Trades Unions. Sir, your ruling prevents us from even talking about what that law is. The Motion goes further and asks that the inquiry should also be an inquiry as to what the alterations of the law should be. But we are not allowed to refer to such alterations, and therefore we are really during the whole of this debate talking in the abstract, and we are unable to illustrate a single argument by a concrete example, and we are in such a position that I hardly think the House —with the exception of those hon. Gentlemen who have gone minutely into these decisions and happen to know them—is in a position to discuss this question at all. Sir, in addition to that we have hon. Members getting up and saying that they do not want this Motion, and therefore I do not really see what use it is to proceed with the discussion. I therefore join with the right hon. Gentleman in asking the hon. Member to withdraw his Motion.

MR. PEMBERTON: With the leave of the House, I should like to withdraw my Motion.

MR. GALLOWAY: And I also ask leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

EARLY CLOSING OF SHOPS.

MR. PRICE (Norfolk, E.) then rose to move "That in the opinion of this House, the unnecessarily long hours of labour in shops are injurious to the health and well-being of all concerned; that it is desirable that Borough and District Councils should be authorised to obtain provisional orders making such regulations in respect to the closing of shops and the limitation of the hours of labour of shop workers as may seem to them to be necessary for the areas under their jurisdiction, thus effectively carrying out the recommendations of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Early Closing of Shops, as embodied in paragraph 15 of the Report of 1901." He said that at that late hour of night he would only very briefly tell the House what had been the Parliamentary history of that movement. It would be in the recollection of hon. Members that in the year 1888 a Bill dealing with the early closing of shops was introduced by Lord Avebury, then Sir John Lubbock, and was rejected by a very large majority. In 1893, however, the House came unanimously to the conclusion that some change in the law was necessary, and consequently in 1895, a Bill effecting that change was introduced and passed a Second Reading. It went to a Select Committee and was there dealt with, but further progress with it was checked because the Government annexed the whole of the time of the House. In 1896, almost the same thing again occurred, the Bill, however, going to the Grand Committee on Trade instead of to a Select Committee. It passed through that Committee with certain Amendments proposed by the Home Office, but again it was lost through want of time. Since then they had had no formal Bill on the subject in the House.

In the House of Lords, however, in 1901 Lord Avebury introduced a Bill, which was referred to a Select Committee where some interesting developments took place. One of the members of that Committee was the Marquess of Salisbury, who was at first disposed to take a very strong line against the measure, judging from the questions he put to some of the witnesses. But after they had called eighty-six witnesses, sixty-two of whom represented large trade interests, Lord Salisbury submitted a recommendation to the Committee setting forth that they were convinced by the evidence that the early closing of shops would be an immense boon to the shopkeeping community, both shopkeepers and shop-assistants alike; that the present hours were grievously injurious to the health, especially of women, and undermined their constitutions, and recommending that Town Councils should be authorised to pass Provisional Orders making such regulations with regard to the closing of shops as might be deemed to be necessary in the areas under their control; such Provisional Orders to be submitted to Parliament in the usual manner.

Now, the Motion he had the honour of submitting that night went generally upon the lines of that recommendation. There were only two points, indeed, in which it differed from it. In the first place Borough and District Councils were substituted for Town Councils, and in the second place he added to the recommendation a limitation of the hours of shopworkers. Indeed he thought that was a necessary corollary. It was obvious that the mere closing of shops would not preclude excessive overtime being worked after the establishment was closed, and therefore it was necessary to include some limitation of hours in the interests of the shop assistant. Anxious as he was to get this matter dealt with by Parliament, however, he would warmly welcome an early closing movement, even if unaccompanied by any recommendation as to the hours of labour. In refreshing his memory with the evidence given before the Committee, he was struck by the terrible position of affairs in many trades. There were three kinds of shops—the rich man's shops, the middle class, and the very poor man's shop. In dealing with the richer class of shop, the matter was comparatively simple. About twelve years ago the Voluntary Early Closing Association was started by the hon. Member for Dulwich and others, and the working of that organisation in the case of the superior class of shop had been most satisfactory and gratifying. Up to that time the hours worked at all shops had been laboriously long. But the Association had produced a marked improvement in that respect in the better class shops which now closed at a reasonable hour in the evening, which gave a weekly half-holiday to the assistants, and in which there was no Sunday labour. In the middle class shops, too, there had also been considerable improvement, but there was still room for more improvement. But when they came to the very poor shops the condition of things that obtained there was terrible to contemplate. The assistant had to work eighty to ninety hours in the week, and one witness stated that to his own knowledge there were shops in one poor district where the employees were working an average of fifteen hours daily, including Sundays. No doubt, that was an extremely rare case, but it was certain that in many poor districts in London, and in some provincial towns, assistants had to work from 8 in the morning till 10.30 on most nights, and even later on Fridays and Saturdays. There was no question that they were dealing with a section of society where life was very hard, and where moments of leisure were very few. And in any legislation which was passed, in any provisional order drafted by Councils, care would have to be taken that unnecessary hardship was not inflicted on the very poor.

One interesting witness examined by the Committee, a lady who had intimate knowledge of the lives of the very poor in London, said that it was no doubt impossible, under present conditions, for the poor to shop earlier in the evening; the husbands were not paid until very late, and, of course, no shopping could be done until they got home with the money. One argument put forward for late shopping was that it was found that at midnight on Saturday the butcher, realising the necessity of disposing of his stock, let it go at very low prices. But surely if he were compelled to close an hour or two earlier the same considerations would still obtain with him; he would still be under the necessity of selling off his meat, and he would let it go at the best price he could get for it. No doubt some of the lateness was due to the habits of the people. Formerly the middle classes were in the habit of shopping late, but, thanks to the voluntary early closing movement, shops were now closed much earlier and yet no public inconvenience was suffered, because people did their shopping earlier. With the middle and upper classes it was unquestionably a matter of habit and convenience, and as far as they were concerned everybody's sympathies would be with the shop assistants. Long confinement indoors was most detrimental to health, and varicose veins were a common form of complaint among assistants. Nothing could be worse for a man than to start a varicose vein, for it led to chronic ulcers.

The question was would an alteration of the law inflict any hardship upon the very poor. They would, no doubt, have to move very carefully in the matter, and that was the reason he had couched his Resolution in such moderate terms. Indeed, so anxious was he to see something done, he was willing to still more modify its wording. If they could by some legislative means bring about an improved condition of affairs they certainly ought to do so. The Voluntary Early Closing Association had done extremely well, but it had made no practical impression on very poor shops. If they could contract the hours slightly at first, they would alter the habits of the people, they might be able to induce them to shop earlier on Saturday night, and the result would be a great boon to a hard-working and very much overworked section of the community. Shop assistants represented a large proportion of the population. There was a great tendency for people to migrate from the country into our large towns, and they got into crowded centres where the conditions of life were far from healthy. Everything possible ought therefore to be done to render more healthy those conditions. It was with that object that he moved the Resolution, and it would be very gratifying to him if he were told by the Government that night, seeing that both sides of the House were agreed upon the main principle, that they were themselves prepared to take up the question and introduce what would be a most beneficent reform.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) rose to second the Resolution. He did not suppose there would be any strong opposition to it, seeing that it practically embodied the words of Lord Salisbury, and he hoped it would be supported by the Government and carried by the House. But that would not take the matter very far. The Resolution would be carried and they would hear no more about it. What he wanted to ask the Government to do was to assure the House that not only would they sympathetically support the Resolution, but that during the course of the present session they would give practical effect to the policy of Lord Salisbury. This case was a very fair example of the extreme slowness and difficulty with which social reforms were carried in this country. This was a question which had been before Parliament for the last quarter of a century. So long ago as 1886 there was a Bill introduced into that House upon which a Committee sat, in which all the evils at which the present Motion was directed were brought under the notice of Members of Parliament. More than that, two years later a memorial was addressed to Parliament by all the most prominent medical authorities in London, including the President of the Royal College of Physicians and a President of the Royal College of Surgeons, pointing out to the House of Commons the great social danger of these long shop hours, particularly in the case of women. The heads of the medical profession of that day declared that these long hours gave a very great impulse to tubercular disease, rickets, and other diseases to which town populations were liable, and which had a very serious effect on the next generation. That was fifteen years ago, and the young men and women employed in those days under such conditions had proved very bad parents, from a physical point of view, to the generation which was now rising up. How could they expect, when they had more than three-fourths of the population gathered together in the towns, that the nation would be physically healthy if they allowed that state of things to continue year after year? However, after 1888, not very much was done. Not long afterwards a Government came into office which was so occupied with the Home Rule Bill, and subsequently with ploughing the sands, that it was not able to attend to the social wants of the people.

In 1895 there was a gleam of hope. There was a General Election in that year, and Members of the Party now in power, in the course of that election, vied with each other in assuring the electors that they would make the social condition of the people their one consideration. They had no United Kingdom to dismember, and no Parliamentary reform to occupy themselves with. They had, in fact, they said, nothing to do but to attend to the social condition of the people. They were returned to power, and practically nothing was done. A good deal was heard about the case of the shop assistants during the progress of the election, but nothing was heard of it in the legislature except the various attempts made by Sir John Lubbock to bring the subject under consideration. And it was not until Sir John had been translated to the House of Lords that he was able, in 1901, to bring in a Bill. That Bill was referred to a Select Committee, and on that Select Committee was Lord Salisbury, who, at that time was Prime Minister, and who, being entirely convinced of the necessity for some legislation, joined in the unanimous report of the Committee, which proposed a remedy for the evil. He believed that Lord Salisbury, on that occasion, indicated for the first time the real direction in which reform should take place, viz., by leaving it to the local authorities to make such regulations as were suitable to the circumstances of each particular case. After all, the closing of shops and the shortening of the hours of workers must depend largely upon the habits of the people and the circumstances of the locality. Lord Salisbury proposed that the duty of framing the regulations should be entrusted to the local authorities, who would be better able to lay down rules suitable to the requirements of their respective districts. He attached certain restrictions, which appeared to be scarcely necessary. Personally, he could not see why the local regulations should be subject to the confirmation of Parliament. He thought that if the Government would carry a Bill exactly on the lines of the recommendation made by Lord Salisbury two years ago, it would be a very satisfactory step in the direction of progress.

The Committee reported in 1901, and it might have been supposed that the Government would, in the following year, bring in a Bill giving effect to its recommendations. But they had done nothing of the kind. A Bill had been brought in in another place, however, though not by a supporter of the present Government, which exactly carried out Lord Salisbury's proposal There was little probability of the House of Lords not supporting the unanimous conclusion of its own Committee of 1891, so that that Bill would doubtless reach the House of Commons. He assumed the Home Secretary would not oppose the Resolution under discussion, but he hoped that in addition, in order to give effect to the Resolution, he would assure the House that when the Bill to which he had referred reached the House of Commons it would receive the support of the Government.

Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the unnecessarily long hours of labour in shops are injurious to the health and well-being of all concerned; that it is desirable that Borough and District Councils should be authorised to obtain Provisional Orders making such regulations in respect to the closing of shops and the limitation of the hours of labour of shop workers as may seem to them to be necessary for the areas under their jurisdiction, thus effectively carrying out the recommendation of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Early Closing of Shops, as embodied in paragraph 15 of the Report of 1901."—(*Mr. Price.*)

MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.): I shall not follow the right hon. Gentleman opposite in the controversial parts of his speech; I will only say that, as usual, he has dealt out even-handed justice. I am prepared to admit, as he has frankly admitted, that neither Party is altogether free from blame in this matter; but, if we were to enter into the question of the apportionment of the blame, I should say that the Party which has been in power, with a large majority in both Houses, during the last few years should, at any rate, accept its share. I have risen, however, simply to re-echo the appeal which has been made from both sides of the House, for some reassuring declaration on this subject. There are two propositions in regard to this matter which I think have now passed beyond the region of possible dispute. The first is as to the gravity and magnitude of the evil itself. The report of the Committee to which reference has been made shows that the average hours of shop assistants in London are between seventy-five and eighty hours per week, and very often you have to add to that from half-an-hour to two hours per day during which they carry on their work after the shops are closed. I cannot help contrasting that with the effect of the evidence given before the same inquiry with regard to co-operative stores, in which, you may say, both employers and employed belong to the labouring class. These are carried on with the most profitable results, and yet the hours of labour rarely, if ever, exceed sixty-five per week. If co-operative stores, catering for the same class of people as many of the poorer shops, can do their business at a profit, and exact from their employees only sixty-five hours per week, it is an unnecessary scandal that eighty, ninety, or even a hundred hours per week should be exacted in other shops.

I need not enlarge on the enormous injury inflicted on people by these long hours. Without any exaggeration, and after long study of the question, I really believe that there is no class of the population, except the very lowest stratum of the working class, who are so badly off as regards facilities for humane and civilised life as shop assistants. Just consider what it means. They are in the shop for fourteen hours out of the twenty four; they are beyond all possibility of enjoying domestic, social, or civic life; they have no means of recreation, physical or intellectual; they are practically working slaves. Nothing struck me more, in reading the evidence given before the Committee, than a statement of the Rev. J. W. Horsley, a well-known clergyman in South London, to the effect that the tradesman class, meaning shop assistants, and small tradesmen who have no assistants of their own, never enter the public libraries. You see artisans, clerks, and members of almost every other class of the community availing themselves of these libraries, but shop assistants cannot. I am sure I have the universal sympathy of the House in saying that such a state of things is a disgrace.

The second proposition, which I think is equally clear, is that it has been demonstrated by a generation of disinterested and zealous effort, that voluntary action is not sufficient. We have had our Early Closing Associations, and they have undoubtedly done a great deal, particularly in the better class of shops, not so much to shorten the average hours of labour, as to bring about something in the nature of a weekly half-holiday. But voluntary associations are insufficient for the purpose, as has been shown over and over again, because a single, selfish, profit-seeking tradesman in a district can defeat the combined action of those who are disposed to close their shops and give reasonable facilities to their employees.

These two propositions being granted, and I think they are amply proved, we are driven to legislation. It is really a melancholy and discreditable thing that for eighteen years, while both parties in the State had been practically agreed on these two propositions, nothing really effective has been done, except that very homœo pathic measure for shortening the hours of young persons in shops, which does very little, and is, I am afraid, but inadequately administered. What I want to elicit from the Government, if I can, is this. The right hon. Gentleman opposite has shown that Lord Salisbury himself has indicated a way. I want the Government to assure us that they will take up seriously, and this session, one or other of the practical proposals which have been put before Parliament, and so bring about a solution of this evil. For myself, though I admit there are arguments on both sides, I think that, on the whole, the balance of argument is in favour of leaving the matter to the discretion of the local authorities. The conditions are so various, as between different communities, that to lay down a hard and fast cast-iron rule for the whole country might be productive of considerable mischief. I have sufficient confidence in the county and town councils—and I believe that confidence is shared by the bulk of Members on both sides—to know that in these matters they would be responsive to public opinion and anxious to improve the condition of this class of the population, without, on the other hand, being guilty of anything in the nature of tyranny or arbitrary action. I would leave the matter to them without any reference to Parliament. The machinery of a Provisional Order, with its delay, cumbrousness, and expense, is not one that it is desirable to use in a matter of this kind. But I do not want to labour that now. I want an assurance from the Government that when that measure reaches this House they will grant it the facilities which only a Government can give, so that it may pass into law, and at last clear away from our social structure that which has long been a scandal and a disgrace.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said the right hon. Gentleman opposite had stated that the shop assistants worked very long hours, and therefore he would place the whole of the business of the shopkeepers in the hands of the Borough Councils. ("No.") He thought that was the result of the right hon. Gentleman's argument. The local authorities were to fix the hours—not the hours that the people might work, but the hours that the shops were to be kept open. They might have poor people, a poor man and his wife, who were ready to keep open in order to earn a little money, and the right hon. Gentleman would compel them to close. That was a most extraordinary doctrine to be enunciated from the Front Bench opposite. It really seemed as though the people of this country were not to be allowed to do anything except under the regulation of the local authority. Much had been said lately as to the necessity of education to enable us to compete commercially with other countries, but what was wanted was not so much legislation as the freedom of every man to manage his own affairs in the way he thought best for his own interests. The mover of the Resolution was evidently aware of the evils which might result from the Motion, because he had said that it should be put in force slightly and tentatively at first. But there was nothing in the

Resolution to that effect. The question of the very poor came in. People who were employed until six or seven o'clock, and had their purchases to make after they arrived home, would, under this Resolution, be unable to do their shopping at all. There were also the small shopkeepers, who would practically be deprived of their means of livelihood. Many of these people, although their shops were open from eight o'clock in the morning, did not really commence business until eight o'clock in the evening, the remainder of the day being spent in the shop parlour.

The Act of three or four years ago, by which shopkeepers were compelled to provide seats for their women assistants, had to a great extent removed the evils to which reference had been made by previous speakers. The medical evidence before the House of Lords Committee was practically confined to women, and if the hon. Member had introduced a Resolution restricting the hours of women he might possibly have supported it. Up to the present there had been no legislation affecting the hours of labour of the adult male. As to the hours of railway servants, they were not limited. If representations were made that the hours of labour of railway servants were excessive, and might cause danger to the public, the Board of Trade had power to step in and say that such hours should not be worked. But that was an entirely different thing from laying down a hard-and-fast rule that no adult male was to work beyond a certain number of hours per week. Even if the hon. Member had confined this Resolution to saying that the hours of shop assistants were to be limited, it would be introducing a very dangerous precedent, and one which might lead to serious results. But the hon. Member had gone further than that, and declared that a man might not work for himself as long as he liked without State interference. That was a serious matter, and he hoped the Government would say that as long as a man chose to work in this free country he should be allowed to do so. In that way they would do more for the prosperity of the country than would be done by all the efforts of Ministers of Commerce, Borough Councils, and other people who knew nothing whatever about the particular cases with which they might have to deal.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.) said the hon. Member for Peckham had made a great point of the freedom of a man to work as long as he pleased, but that also implied the freedom of an unreasonable person to make his competitors work as long as he pleased, and in this country we usually proceeded on the assumption that the wisdom of the many was superior to the obstinacy of the one. The Committee of the House of Lords, whose Report was largely drawn up by Lord Salisbury himself, stated:—

> "We have endeavoured to ascertain the views of the shopkeepers themselves, by evidence, petition, and resolution. We have had before us the views of a large number of tradesmen, and of associations formed for the purposes of trade in all parts of the country. Of these over 2,900 are in favour of the general provisions of the Early Closing Bill, and many would wish to see it made more stringent, while the only tradesmen or associations who have petitioned or desired to give evidence against the Bill are the off-licence holders and the London pawnbrokers."

That did not appear to support the arguments of the hon. Member for Peckham. The hon. Member for the Peckham Division also argued that this proposal would give the Town Council power over the shops within its area. Now what was the proposal? It was not a hard and fast piece of legislation for the whole of the country. It applied in the first instance to that part of the country from which the demand for it arose.

If a Town Council after consulting their constituents and hearing local opinion desired to do something in the way of restricting hours, then that Council might obtain a Provisional Order, with all its safeguards, which must be submitted to this House before it could have the force of law. Could anyone contend that that could be described as handing over the trade of a borough to the local authority. The Report of the Select Committee recommended that the local authority should be authorised to obtain a Provisional Order, which should be submitted to Parliament before it had the force of law. Therefore he submitted to the

House, and especially to the Home Secretary, that the proposal was a moderate and restricted proposal, and that the right hon. Gentleman could hardly decline to extend to it the blessing of the Government. Depend upon it, it would not be availed of in any locality until the municipality were perfectly satisfied that they could adopt it without the risk of losing their own seats. The course of moderation could not further go; and he hoped that the proposal would have the support of the Government. The shop assistants were in favour of it, and he was perfectly certain that the chief thing they desired was a reduction of their hours of labour; the traders themselves approved of it; several associations of employers approved of it; Trades Union Conferences had passed resolutions in favour of it; and he thought that, altogether, the case was a very strong one from every point of view.

*LIEUT.-COLONEL GEORGE KEMP (Lancashire, Heywood) said he wished to say a few words in favour of the Motion, because he had already taken some steps in favour of even more stringent legislation. He did not think that any hon. Member would have opposed the Motion, seeing that its principle had been affirmed over and over again; and he was rather surprised that his hon. friend the Member for the Peckham Division should have taken exception to it on the ground that it would put more power into the hands of the local authorities. Surely they on that side of the House had been giving powers of decentralisation in many directions. They had given it with reference to education, and had trusted the local authorities in that matter; and he hoped that it might be given, in the dim and distant future, even to the Army. If power were given to the local authorities in this matter they would know the requirements of the public, and the wishes of the electorate would be consulted. After all the principal part of the electorate were not shopkeepers or shop assistants, but the public; and the great argument, as he understood it, against the Motion was, that the public might be inconvenienced by any curtailment of hours; but as the public formed the larger part of the electorate, their wishes would be the most consulted by the local authorities. They knew from the Report of the Committee of the House of Lords that the shopkeepers as a whole were entirely in favour of legislation on the lines of the Motion, and he hoped that the Government would see their way to take the matter up and pass the desired legislation. He thought it would be a grave reflection on the House if, after acknowledging the principle for so many years, they were to let the matter slide. However, he had every confidence that the Government would show that in this respect they cared for the real interests of the hard working people of this country; and that they would add to the Statute Book a measure which would materially increase their happiness.

*MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire) said that the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Peckham Division stated that if the Resolution were limited to the case of women he was not sure that he might not support it. He did not feel very sure that the hon. Gentleman would support it even then.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY: Withdraw the Motion and introduce one referring to women.

*MR. TENNANT said that he had not the good fortune of his hon. friend in the ballot, but if he had he would not have introduced a less drastic Motion. Probably his Motion would be a little more forward, because he agreed with the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken that the House had nothing to boast about in its relation to this question. What had they done? They passed what his right hon. friend called a homœopathic measure, but what was the use of homœopathy in a case like this. The Chancellor of the Exchequer knew as well as anyone else that the only law of the land with reference to shops except the Seats Act was the Act limiting the hours of young persons to 74 a week, and this was not administered in 50 per cent. of the cases. It could not be administered because young girls, of all ages up to eighteen, could not remember at the end of the week how many hours they had worked. They got bamboozled when they were asked.

The hon. Member for the Peckham Division also introduced the story of the man and his wife, and their old friend the widow. They had timely warning given to them by the hon. Member for Battersea not to be misled by the old story of the widow. Finally the hon. Member for the Peckham Division came to the conclusion that if this country meant to compete with foreign countries it should employ women and girls eighty-four or ninety hours a week.

He had from his hon. friend the Member for the Clitheroe Division a list of the hours worked per week in the Co-operative Society at Darwen. They were as follows:—Monday, ten and a half; Tuesday, four; Wednesday, nine and a half; Thursday, ten; Friday, eleven and a half; and Saturday, eleven and a half—a total of fifty-seven hours per week. He was talking to a shop assistant some time ago, and she said she worked from seventy-six to eighty hours, and she added that that was nothing to the hours of her little sister in Kings Road, Chelsea, who worked 91 hours a week, including six hours on Sunday. He had been refreshing his memory with the evidence given before the Committee of the House of Lords, the most interesting part of which was the evidence of Miss Octavia Hill, and her cross-examination by the late Prime Minister. Lord Salisbury could only be persuaded with great difficulty that shops did remain open in London on Sundays, and he asked if there was not an Act of Parliament against it. No doubt there was, but as the penalty was only 2s. 6d., and as the shopkeeper would make at least 3s. 6d. by keeping open, it was not surprising that the Act was almost a dead letter. He sincerely hoped that this Motion would be carried. They had remained too long looking at the subject; and it was really a reproach on the House of Commons that it had delayed so long in dealing with it.

MAJOR EVANS-GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said he was in general agreement with what had fallen from his hon. friend the Member for the Peckham Division; but he hoped that, in agreeing with his hon. friend, it would not be supposed that he was wanting in sympathy with people who had to work in many cases very long hours. But although they might have the deepest sympathy with such people—and he was sure he had—they should think of the shopkeepers to whom his hon. friend referred, and whose very lives depended on keeping their shops open to what might seem unreasonable hours. In the part of London which he represented, the people who did the shopping were employed in all parts of the Metropolis. They were out at all hours, and bought the smallest quantity at the most extra ordinary hours of the day and night, when the money happened to come in. It would be a terrible hardship on the shopkeepers and those people if they were handed over to the local authority It had been said by his hon. friend opposite that they were out of touch with the sentiments of those people if it was thought that they desired to keep their shops open; but he knew that a great number of the people in the East End of London would view the adoption of this Motion with great alarm. There were one or two points which had not yet been dealt with, to which he wished to refer. Had it occurred to anyone the extraordinary situation that would arise if, for instance, in the East End of London one Borough Council were to adopt a resolution of this nature, and a neighbouring Borough Council were not. That would create a most extraordinary state of things, and he submitted it was a very great objection. One other point had not been referred to. There were 80,000 people in London who would be affected by this Resolution—he meant the costermongers. In the East End of London an immense amount of shopping was done from barrows, and a great number of people were employed in carrying perishable goods about the streets in barrows. It would be a great hardship on them if they were told that after a certain hour they could not sell their goods.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said the House knew the facts with regard to the danger and evils which accrued from late shopping, and he was really surprised that the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just sat down had not expressed his intention to abate the nuisance. He was also sorry that the hon. and gallant Gentleman should have introduced the East End of London, and should have used reactionary and obsolete arguments. He too represented a constituency in which there were large numbers of poor people, and also costermongers, and he contended that in the interest of the shopkeeper, in the interest of the shop assistant, in the interest of the purchaser, and in the interest of the costermonger, there was no reason why a maximum number of hours should not be fixed. The hon. and gallant Gentleman spoke of men who were employed late at night, but who bought the food for such men? Who bought lighterman's steak? If he were a decent fellow, as he generally was, he was married, and his wife bought it.

MAJOR EVANS-GORDON said that a carman's wife could not buy food until the carman came home late at night with his money.

MR. JOHN BURNS said he would deal with that later. The lighterman's wife bought his steak, if he were married; and if he were single, his landlady bought it, but not at one or two o'clock in the morning. If the landlady wanted to get her young man lodger into a happy mood, she would buy his steak at a proper hour, and not have to depend on cagmag ornaments. As to the carman, he was not paid daily. He was paid on Tuesdays and Fridays, and had sufficient money to allow his wife or his landlady to shop at reasonable hours. Mechanics now had short hours, but they were inclined to rather selfishly impose long hours on the people who served them. The shopkeeper's assistant ought to get protection from the too often selfish and greedy mechanic, whose wife too frequently bought the Sunday dinner at midnight on Saturday night. He would tell the hon. and gallant Member what would happen. The local authorities, when this Resolution took the form of an Act, would give it six months working, and if an anomaly was disclosed they would make the Resolution uniform and applicable to all the Borough Council areas.

The hon. Baronet the Member for Peckham really surprised him on these matters. He had spoken on behalf of working men, but he really did not know a great deal about them. The hon. Member had stated that there were some people who worked late at night. That was no excuse for late shopping. Workmen did not shop. Shopping was done by their wives and families. Skilled and unskilled labourers were now getting reasonably short hours, and it was scandalous that shops should be open for sixteen hours, though they were not doing more than six or eight hours effective work in the time. The hon. Member for Peckham did not go shopping after eleven o'clock at night. In the West End of London the big shops were as a rule closed early. If Belgravia could shop at the Army and Navy Stores between ten and five o'clock, he saw no reason why something like reasonable hours should not be kept in the New Cut. Voluntary closing could be broken down by a few greedy shopkeepers with a little capital; the pressure of a law in which common-sense should be embodied was required. In the East End there was no reason why British shop keepers should be subjected to the unfair competition of aliens who worked from sixteen to eighteen hours a day, and, as was shown last week at Stepney, sometimes disposed of putrid foodstuffs in the late rush on Saturday night. It was because he believed that the adoption of such a Resolution as this would enable the people to buy better and cheaper food, at a time of day when they could detect the bad from the good, that he supported it.

* MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: The House will desire to hear from me what reception the Government are prepared to give to this Resolution, and what view we take in regard to this matter. I cannot complain at all of the terms of the Resolution moved by the hon. Member for East Norfolk, nor of the tone in which he has addressed the House. I fully sympathise with him in the view he takes as to the hardships which are inflicted on many of these people in the shops of London. There has been a very general opinion for a long time past in favour of some form of early closing. I think opinion has certainly grown in the last five or six years in that direction. There is, I think, quite a general desire that shops should close earlier, and possibly the only feeling which is in conflict with that view is the feeling which has been expressed by the hon. Members for Peckham and Stepney, who seem to think, and possibly not without reason, that the smaller shopkeepers might suffer. But I am one of those who think that we might safely adopt the suggestion contained in the final clause of the report of the Lords Committee, and allow the Borough Councils to deal with this question. I think they are perfectly capable of exercising the power, and further than that, I honestly believe they will exercise it with justice. I believe that they will not venture, probably, to make any such proposition unless they have first taken a plebiscite of their population and decided on it upon a given proportion, and I believe that in most of the districts or boroughs three-fourths of the shopkeepers themselves would vote in favour of a proposition for the earlier closing of shops. There need not be any hardship on the smaller shopkeepers, because their views would in one way or another be heard.

My right hon. friend the Member for Cambridge University has challenged us for not having ourselves introduced a Bill to deal with this subject in the years we have been in office. As my hon. friend the Member for Peckham has pointed out, a certain amount of the blame, if blame there be, falls equally on his shoulders, because he was a Member of the same Government. But I do not think the question was quite in the same position then as it has been since this unanimous report of the House of Lords Committee was presented. I think that the feeling that we were not at all assured that there was any general opinion in favour of this proposal, or any general likelihood of being able to carry a Measure of this sort unless it was made a principal Measure and a large amount of time devoted to it, may now, to a certain extent, be set aside. I cannot accept the challenge of my right hon. friend that we should ourselves this year introduce a Measure of this character. We have already got a large amount of legislation to deal with, probably a larger amount has been given notice of in the King's Speech than we shall be able to carry, and I have myself often witnessed, as most hon. and right hon. Gentlemen in this House who have been in any Administration must have done, the trouble the Government get into near the end of the session by having overloaded their coach in starting. I am not prepared to accept the responsibility of introducing legislation upon the question myself, but I am perfectly prepared to view with favour any Measure laid before the House which is based on what has been alluded to as Lord Salisbury's Clause in the Lords' Report. I would point out to my hon. friend the Member for East Norfolk that he does not entirely follow this in the Resolution he moved. He winds up his Resolution by saying—

> "Thus effectively carrying out the recommendation of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Early Closing of Shops, as embodied in paragraph 15 of the Report of 1901;"

and yet in the earlier part of his Resolution he asks us to agree to a proposal which would include the limitation of the hours of labour in shops. There is nothing of that in the Resolution carried in the House of Lords.

Then I have felt that that Bill which was introduced and printed the other day, and which stands in the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Forest of Dean, went a very great deal farther than the Resolution proposed in the House of Lords. I would point out to my hon. friends who favour the proposal that the Government should deal with this question, that it is not at all certain that, even if we accepted the challenge, the House would generally agree to support such a Measure, because my right hon. friend the Member for Forest of Dean would be the first to endeavour to extend it to the extent of his own Bill. I venture to say, that if the Measures alluded to by the hon. Member for East Norfolk as now awaiting Second Reading in another place—one of which he says is based on this Report, and the other of which stands in the name of Lord Avebury, who may be called almost the father of this question—came down here, or came in a consolidated form, it is not at all certain that a large section of the House would accept it, or that the Measure would receive general support. I have no doubt that the hon. Member who moved the Resolution would accept it, because he said in so many words that he would accept a moderate Bill, and although he might considerate it only a tentative one, he would vote for it in this House. I am not at all certain whether the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Forest of Dean would view the matter in the same light. He would very probably seek very largely to extend its scope, and therefore certainly prevent the possibility of any Bill which came down here late in the session being able to pass under the limited opportunities which offer themselves at that period of the year. I only hope that the more moderate view of the hon. Member for East Norfolk may obtain if those measures come down to this House, because I am firmly of opinion that we shall advance very considerably with a moderate proposal such as this would be if based on the Report. I can only repeat that I am ready to welcome on behalf of the Government any Measure based on the Resolution to which allusion has been made, but I cannot hold out any hope of the Government being able to legislate.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said he might be allowed to state in reply to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman that he might not be disposed to accept a Measure which came down from another place that that question was not before the House at present. He was quite content with the Resolution moved by his hon. friend. The Trade Union Congress and the organised workers in this trade preferred the Bill under his charge, but they accepted the Resolution of his hon. friend and were prepared to support it. He submitted that they ought to be allowed to take the sense of the House on the Resolution because the words to which the Home Secretary had taken exception were words which were necessary to efficiently carry out Lord Salisbury's clause.

Resolved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the unnecessarily long hours of labour in Shops are injurious to the health and well-being of all concerned; that it is desirable that Borough and District Councils should be authorised to obtain Provisional Orders making such regulations in respect to the closing of shops and the limitation of the hours of labour of shop workers as may seem to them to be necessary for the areas under their jurisdiction; thus effectively carrying out the recommendation of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Early Closing of Shops, as embodied in paragraph 15 of the Report of 1901."—(*Mr. Price.*)

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTORATE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) moved the Second Reading of this Bill. He said he would be able to show that ratepayers in Scotland, and especially in the Highlands, whose rentals did not exceed £4 per annum, had a very serious grievance in this matter.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

Adjourned at two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 5th March, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:

Harrow and Stanmore Gas [H.L.].
Taff Vale Railway [H.L.].
London and North-Western Railway [H.L.].
North's Navigation Collieries [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Gosport, Fareham and Cosham Tramways Bill [H.L.]

Presented; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) Bill [H.L.]
Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) Bill [H.L.]

Presented, and read 1ª.

Fife Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Bournemouth Gas and Water Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Exeter Railway Bill [H.L.]; Faversham Gas Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Tramways (Extensions) Bill [H.L.]; Hexham Gas Bill [H.L.]; Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; London, Brighton and South Coast Railway Bill [H.L.]; Nantwich Gas Bill [H.L.]; South Wales Mineral Railway Bill [H.L.]; South-Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway Bill [H.L.]; Wellington (Salop) Gas Bill [H.L.]; Western Trust Bill [H.L.]; Wirral Railway Bill [H.L.]; British Gas Light Company (Norwich) Bill [H.L.]; Cleveland and Durham County Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Dudley, Stourbridge, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Pelican and British Empire Life Office Bill [H.L.]; Plymouth and Stonehouse Gas Bill [H.L.]; Poole and District Electric Traction Bill [H.L.]; Port Talbot Railway and Docks Bill [H.L.]; Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage Bill [H.L.]; South-Eastern and London, Chatham and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]; Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Bill [H.L.].

Read 2ª.

Birmingham District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Chatham and District Light Railways Bill [H.L.]; Croydon and District Electric Tramways Bill; Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways Bill; Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Macclesfield and District Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway (Various Powers) Bill; Mid Yorkshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Sheffield Corporation Bill; Shepshed Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Strabane and Letterkenny Railway Bill; Tynemouth and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Preston and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Lancashire) Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways (Cheshire) Bill [H.L.]; Wigan Corporation Tramways Bill; Lanarkshire and Dumbartonshire Railway Bill; Derby Gas Bill [H.L.]; Gosport, Fareham, and Cosham, Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Wakefield and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill.

Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TURKEY, No. 2 (1903).

Further correspondence respecting the affairs of South-Eastern Europe (reforms in the administration of the vilayets of Salonika, Monastir, and Kossovo).

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 2941. France (trade of French Guinea for 1901).

CENSUS (SCOTLAND), 1901.

Eleventh decennial census of the population of Scotland, taken 31st March, 1901; with Report. (Vol. II.)

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION.

Fifty-fifth Report from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England; with an appendix.

LOCAL TAXATION.

Index to the Reports of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN IRELAND (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Final Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the present conditions of the higher, general, and technical education available in Ireland outside Trinity College, Dublin; with an appendix.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION ACT, 1888.

rder made by the Board of Trade under the provisions of the Act for the variation of their order creating the Devon Sea Fisheries District, together with report by inspector on inquiry.

LEEWARD ISLANDS.

Amended prison rules relating to the employment of hard labour (male prisoners).

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILL.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING (LONDON) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to provide for the adjustment in accordance with changes of boundary effected under the London Government Act, 1899, of the areas within which local authorities and companies are authorised to supply electricity.—Was presented by the Lord Wolverton; read 1^{a}, and to be printed. (No. 10.)

ARMY ORGANISATION.

* **Earl CARRINGTON**: My Lords, it will be in the recollection of your Lordships that, on the occasion of the Address in reply to the gracious Speech from the Throne, my noble friend the Leader of the Opposition (Earl Spencer) made the remark that the question of Army re-organisation was a serious one, and that we ought to know what His Majesty's Government proposed to do. The reply of the noble Duke the Leader of the House was that the views of the Government upon the subject would be expressed on the introduction of the Army Estimates in the House of Commons. I am bound to confess it struck me, when I heard that remark, that the Members of your Lordship's House would hardly be content to receive the information that they had a right to demand through the medium of a small deputation of Peers, perched in mid-air and bundled in a small gallery of a House to which they did not belong, in which they were not permitted to speak, and were especially, on the introduction of a subject of taxation which they were constitutionally prevented from discussing or amending. I therefore offer no apology to the Government for putting down the Motion that stands in my name as the most legitimate way of obtaining information with respect to Army organisation, which not only the House of Lords, but the nation is most anxious to receive. My Motion reads as follows: "To move to resolve that in the opinion of this House His Majesty's Government should re-consider their scheme of military organisation, having regard to the experience of the war in South Africa, and to the naval and military requirements of the Empire."

The experiences of the war seem to me to be so interwoven with the new scheme of Government, indeed, they are almost the *raison d'être* of the introduction of this scheme, that I shall ask the permission of the House to say a few words on the experiences which the country has gained from the war in South Africa. I may say at once that the first experience of the Government when the war broke out was a very satisfactory one, for they had the entire and undivided support in the prosecution of the war of a resolute and united country. That is not questioned, and I think it shows that there was some injustice in the torrent of abuse and invective poured on the devoted heads of the Party to which I have the honour to belong, a Party which, in their worst time, certainly constitute a large portion of the voting power of the country, and which, I think I can honestly say, would, if the opinion of the nation was now taken, be found to be in a very considerable majority. I admit that there are a number of our fellow-countrymen who look upon all war as a crime, and therefore they are in honour bound to oppose it; but we, the small band of Liberal Peers who have tried to keep the Liberal flag flying in this House, and who, I venture to think, represent the great majority of Liberal opinion throughout the country, have had nothing to do with that small section. It is, of course, true that we opposed the policy of the Government before the war broke out, but we did so, not because we considered that the grievances of our fellow-countrymen in the Transvaal were imaginary or immaterial, but because we honestly thought that of all the ways of remedying those grievances—and there were a great many ways of remedying them — the worst possible way was to adopt a bluffing policy, which was absolutely certain to lead us into war.

So much for our experiences before the war. I now come to our experiences when the war broke out, and when the Boers successfully overran defenceless Natal. We on this side of the House were then led by a Statesman whose value to to the country has, I think, never been sufficiently recognised—I refer to the late Lord Kimberley—and who put the case very clearly when he said that war was not our solution, but that, as war had been declared on this country, it was useless to discuss whether the Government were driven into it, whether they had drifted or blundered into it, or whether, as some people thought, they deliberately chose war. We had not to discuss that, but to face the fact that war had been declared. We had hoped that the policy of colonising by ball cartridge had disappeared with the days of the Third George, but we were mistaken. Sentiment said it was hateful for a great country like England, with all its christianising and civilising influences, to go to war with two small farmer States, whose heroic resistance in the cause of their liberty and independence has justly won them the admiration of the whole civilised world.

"But," said Lord Kimberley, with his stern, relentless logic, "you must put sentiment on one side, you are at war, and in war there is no half-way house. It must be short, sharp and decisive, and the country must fight, and fight with all its might, if it is not prepared to see Natal and the Cape Colony become the forfeit of the Colonial Secretary's most unfortunate diplomacy." Lord Kimberley told us that our duty was threefold — firstly, we must vote as many men and as much money as the Government required; secondly, it was our duty to see that the war was efficiently conducted, and that our over-worked, underpaid, badly-fed, uncomplaining, brave and humane troops lacked nothing; and last and most important of all, Lord Kimberley said it was our bounden duty not to say or to do anything, either in the House or on the platform, that would by word or deed harass or embarrass His Majesty's Government.

I claim, my Lords, that we have faithfully carried out the instructions that that great Statesman gave us. I think I can go further and say that we came to the rescue of His Majesty's Government at a very critical and dangerous time. The House will remember that in the early stages of the war, when we heard of terrible catastrophes, there was a most determined attempt made by a strong section of the Ministerial Press and Ministerial supporters to try and drive a high-minded, honourable Statesman out of public life. We would not touch that proposition with the tongs. We remember the glorious example that was shown us by the greatest of English Queens — her courage under difficulties, her belief in her people—and we regret that the agony and distress of that terrible time no doubt shortened the last days of that valuable and beloved life. We saw the patience of the people of this country, their determination to overlook any mistakes of general officers or of Statesmen, and we said it was better far that we should live through this terrible time than join that portion of the great Unionist Party who showed themselves weak, volatile, and hysterical, desiring to hound an honourable Statesman out of public life at the first symptom of danger or of national stress and storm. So much for what happened during the war. I claim, and I think I can claim truly, that we did our duty to our country. We ask for no thanks, we ask for no credit; we did our duty; and now the question I have to ask this House is, can it be truthfully said that the Government of the country did theirs?

I should like to have a decided answer to this question. Whose fault was it? Was it the fault of the Government, who had a majority, with their Irish allies, of 250 in the House of Commons, and a majority of nearly 600 in this House? Was it the fault of our soldiers? Was it the fault of the Opposition, which has been called disorganised and impotent? Whose fault was it that it took 448,000 men from all parts of the Empire three years, fighting for their lives, at the terrible cost to the country of £250,000,000, to defeat the two nations of Boers, whose complete war debt was but £4,500,000? Whose fault was it there was such a dreadful butcher's bill? And lastly, whose fault was it that four battles, of which Magersfontein was the last, had to be fought before the British forces had been supplied with what was necessary for a successful offensive movement? We bring this serious indictment against His Majesty's Government. We say they did not have sufficient courage to ask the country to provide them with the necessary amount adequately to prepare for the great struggle which they said was inevitable, and which they knew was approaching, and that the whole of the early part of the campaign was spoilt by the political considerations which entailed what were called the unfortunate incidents in Natal. If that is challenged I have only to point to the evidence that was given by Sir Ian Hamilton before the Commission presided over by my noble friend Lord Elgin. Again, we say that His Majesty's Government showed most remarkable ignorance and inability to judge the conditions of South African warfare. As proof of that I need only point to one instance, which will ever be remembered by the people of this country. We were at war with men who were born and bred in the saddle, and yet, when Australia offered this country at that time of trouble a legion of horsemen, the wires flashed back this message, "unmounted men preferred."

I come now to the time when Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener, at a moment's notice, took charge of the operations. What happened then? We had to face, at a time of war, the creation of an army which ought to have been got ready as soon as the Government realised the seriousness of the undertaking, and that was, of course, at the moment war broke out. What was the result? Every single branch of the Service broke down, and what had we to rely on? We had to rely on the might and majesty of the great British fleet, whose power owes so much to the initiation and courage of my noble friend behind me (Lord Spencer), on the patriotism of our colonies and the courage and endurance of our troops; and last, but not least, on the efficiency and the resource of the mercantile marine, to pull us through. There was not one single branch of the service which did not break down, and it is enough to make the boldest man shudder to think what would have happened if, instead of being engaged in a war with the Boers, we had been at war with one or two of the first rate Powers. Where could we have got our supplies? We had to ransack every country in Europe and America to get provisions and munitions of war, which, probably, had we been engaged in war with one of the Great Powers, it would have been impossible to obtain. One would have thought that this experience would have taught the Government a lesson, and that some manœuvres on the line of Boer tactics would have been ordered, as has been done in France. One would also have thought that some great scheme of protection for this country would have been brought forward, and that we should have been able to feel perfectly safe and sleep securely in our beds, whatever emergencies might arise. I think that is very far from being the case at present.

Two years ago Mr. Secretary Brodrick brought in a scheme of Army Reform based on an Army Corps system. It was well received by the House of Commons, though it was at once most adversely criticised by my right hon. friend Sir H. Campbell Bannerman, one of the best War Ministers this country has ever had. How is that scheme regarded at the present day? It has been most fiercely attacked by a great section of the Conservative Party in the House of Commons, and the defence that Mr. Brodrick made a fortnight ago may be briefly summarised in this way. He said: "I claim to have done fairly well. I will tell you what I have done. I have raised the standard of height of the militia from five feet two inches to five feet three inches. I am also able to inform the House that recruiting is very brisk, and that last year I was able to obtain 52,000 recruits." Well, that sounds very well, but the wastage of the Army requires 50,000 recruits every year, and therefore, in a time of exceptionally brisk recruiting there was only a surplus of 2,000 above what ought to be the normal condition of things. Mr. Brodrick explained that recruiting was brisk because he had ameliorated the condition of the soldier, abolished the petty stoppages to which he had been subjected, made him more comfortable in camp and in barracks. I am afraid that is not the only reason why men are joining the ranks at present. There is a great scarcity of work, and men are unable to obtain employment. We hear the most heartrending stories of men who have fought and bled in the service of their country, and who have been turned adrift and can get no employment whatever. Therefore, I venture to think that this briskness of recruiting is somewhat due to those grim recruiting agents—General Want and General Distress.

Then Mr. Brodrick goes on to say he has added 50,000 men in five years. I suppose that is perfectly true. But he has lost 70,000 Volunteers by this scheme, which was to have re-organised the Army and placed it on a better and more efficient basis. Therefore, I wish to ask the noble Earl the Under Secretary of State for War whether, when it is said that the Government have 50,000 more soldiers, they are counting all the men who have been enlisted at the recruiting depôts. Can he give us a return of the numbers of recruits who have dropped out of the ranks by desertion, or by being cast by the regimental surgeons when they joined the regiments as being unlikely ever to make efficient soldiers?

I should like to ask the noble Earl another question. We are told by Mr. Brodrick that the Army ought to stand at the figure of 259,600 men. Now, why ought the Army to stand at that figure? I want to know, does the Army stand at that figure or does it not? And I should also like the noble Earl to tell us what is the numerical basis on which the Secretary of State calculates the strength of the Army as it ought to be. How does he arrive at his totals? That is what the nation wants to know. Does he quote from the Estimates for 1904, which have not yet been laid upon the Table? If he does, of course it is perfectly useless to try and check his figures. Or does he arrive at his estimate from a calculation worked out up to the day of his speech? Because, if so, that calculation ought certainly to have been laid upon the Table of the House. Or does he base his figures on the Estimates of the present year? If he calculates them on the Estimates of 1903, the situation is more fogged than ever, because on March 5th, 1902, Mr. Brodrick said the Army Establishment was 250,000. The Army Estimates of last year state it to be 293,000, and on February 24th of the present year Mr. Brodrick stated that the strength of the Army was 271,000, as against the 293,000 in the Army Estimates. Yet he states that at present he has 12,000 men over strength. It seems to me that the figures fog everybody, and we should be doubly indebted to the noble Earl if he could give us some information as to how the Secretary of State arrives at his totals.

In 1879 the British Army cost £18,000,000, while on last year's Estimate it cost £30,000,000—that is to say, there has been an increase of £12,000,000 in the cost of the Army. Thus the Estimate for 1902 exceeded that of 1897 by considerably more than a moiety of the 1897 Estimate. On this I have another question to ask, a question which was put by that fearless critic, Mr. Winston Churchill, in his able speech on the Amendment the other day in the House of Commons. Mr. Churchill asked this question of the Prime Minister, which, by accident, or perhaps intentionally, was not answered—namely, Is the 1902 Army in proportion as much better than the 1879 Army, as the sum of 30,000,000 is greater than 18,000,000? —and if the noble Earl replies in the affirmative I would respectfully ask him, in what respect is it better? The Militia are an inch higher I know, but is the Army better in material, is it better as a fighting force, is it better officered, has it better guns?

I shall only touch upon the fringe of the much-disputed Army Corps question. I understand that there are a great many Peers anxious to speak on that matter, and they will be able to address your Lordships with much greater knowledge and authority than I can pretend to possess, but I would point out the three great disabilities of the Army Corps system as it seems to me. The first objection to this great, huge, Army Corps system is that it interferes, as a rival both in money and in men, with the efficiency of the Royal Navy, which is, of course, our great line of defence. Secondly, it also outrages and dislocates the National finance; and thirdly, it strikes at the root of patriotism and at the root of the Volunteer system. When I say that it strikes at the root of patriotism, I should like to give one single example. During the war there were in the Orange Free State—which I think had a population of about 72,000—some 18,000 fighting men. I know they might be called an armed mob, but still they were strong enough, courageous enough, and sufficiently well trained to—to use an Australian expression—for a period "stick up" the whole British Empire. In Natal, the Colony that was invaded and devastated, with a population almost as large as that of the Orange Free State, they only turned out 3,000 Volunteers. What was the reason of that? It was that there was no Standing Army in the Orange Free State, and the men had to rely on their patriotism and on themselves, while in Natal they relied on the assistance of a great fighting army.

Reports are widely circulated to the effect that ever since the present Secretary of State for War accepted the seat of office, he has most resolutely determined to do every single thing in the office himself, and thereby he has reduced the confusion which formerly existed in that department to a state of absolute chaos. Your Lordships will remember that the Prime Minister, at Liverpool, seemed to think there might be some danger in this arrangement, and, in speaking of reforming the small Défence Committee, which at present consists of political amateurs, he recommended a collective authority of efficients. That is no new idea. We have heard of that proposal before. The Prime Minister devoted the first portion of his speech to exposing what he called the crudity and absurdity of a well-known proposal of Lord Rosebery's, while he devoted the second part of his subject to an apotheosis of the so-called absurd and crude suggestion in an exaggerated form. There are some people to whom this rather dangerous state of affairs seems to give a certain amount of grim amusement. We read in the papers that the Colonial Secretary, speaking of the political state of affairs in Cape Colony, said it reminded him somewhat of comic opera. I should like very respectfully to ask how the right hon. gentleman would describe the spectacle of Mr. Brodrick and his Six Army Corps—corps which exist only on paper, and are as visionary as the eight phantom kings who passed before Macbeth in the witches' cave—posing as the balance of power in Europe. If the position in Cape Colony was described as comic opera, I suppose the present position of the War Office, with its chaos and confusion, would be described as an amusing burlesque, or even as a roaring farce. But I am bound to say that that is not the way the Liberal Party, and, I believe, the nation at large, look upon the state of things as they exist at present. They think that this is not only a melodrama, but that if it is permitted to continue it is most probable that it will end in a ghastly tragedy, both abroad and at home. For I cannot conceive anything more likely to produce a terrible political crisis at home—indeed, I do not think I am going too far in saying I know of nothing that might more easily produce a democratic revolution—than for the proud and combative people of this country to find themselves in the vital matter of their defence sacrificed to the ignorance and the incompetence of the members of the self-styled patriotic Unionist Government, to whom, with so much liberality, Englishmen have entrusted the safety, and even the very existence, of the Empire of which they are so proud and of the country they love so well. I beg to move the Motion standing in my name.

Moved to resolve, "That, in the opinion of this House, His Majesty's Government should reconsider their scheme of military organisation, having regard to the experience of the war in South Africa, and to the naval and military requirements of the Empire."—(*The Earl Carrington.*)

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: My Lords, it has always appeared to me that one of the chief lessons of the war was the need of an expeditionary force which could be dispatched by the Cabinet without the delays caused by mobilisation. The first hostile act of the Transvaal Republic occurred on October 2. Parliament met on October 17, the Reserves were called out, the Militia embodied and mobilisation commenced. All this took time. It meant answering the enemy's ultimatum by a procedure which entailed a delay of three weeks. That is not a very prompt or powerful resistance to offer to an ultimatum, but the delay is of great advantage to the enemy. The ideal expeditionary force would be one for the Cabinet to dispatch without mobilisation and the delays which are consequent thereon. At the present time this force would be represented by the First Army Corps at Aldershot. But that Army Corps could not be sent on service without mobilisation so long as we enlist so many immature lads; nearly three-fourths of the men serving with the Colours will have to be replaced by Reservists who, after their absence from the ranks, will be somewhat rusty, as well as strangers to their officers and non-commissioned officers. Thus the great principle enunciated when the Six Army Corps Scheme was devised, that exactly the same officers and men who were to serve abroad in time of war would be trained together in time of peace, will not be very strictly adhered to. I think there is a consensus of opinion that an expeditionary force of the kind I have described would be the most useful force we could possibly have, but it is absolutely certain that with our present military administration the expeditionary force I have indicated is impossible of creation; it would mean the dislocation of the whole of that administration. But if our military administration prevents our having the one force which everyone agrees will be the most useful, it will be well to re-consider that administration. In this country we have all the advantages which are due to our insular situation. That is not so abroad, where our frontiers are adjacent to those of great military nations. The Prime Minister has justified the maintenance of three Army Corps of Regular troops in England for the defence of the north-west frontier of India. I agree that it would not be well to leave the defence of that frontier to the Indian Army alone, but surely England is no longer the proper base from which to defend India. It would be better done from South Africa, which, in the first place, is three weeks nearer in point of distance. It will be always necessary to maintain a large body of troops in South Africa. The objection, of course, arises on the score of the great expense, but if we used South Africa as a base for the defence of India, it would be reasonable to expect the Indian Government to contribute something towards its maintenance. It might also be possible to transfer part of the garrison now in India to South Africa, where the climate is excellent, and there is ample scope for that training, the great importance of which has been fully demonstrated. A scheme like this Army Corps Scheme, which fails to provide us with the one force most requisite for our Imperial needs, seems to me to be obsolete.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of HARDWICKE): My Lords, I apologise to the House for having hesitated to rise to reply to the Motion of he noble Earl, but I cannot help thinking that noble Lords will sympathise with me in the feeling that prompted me to hesitate. I really do not know what I have got to answer. The noble Earl has put down a Motion which has been advertised throughout the Press of the country; people have talked about it, and it was understood that a great attack was going to be made on my right hon. friend the Secretary of State's policy, and that I should be put to the greatest possible difficulty in answering that attack. The noble Earl for twenty minutes gave us a most interesting discourse upon the position of the Liberal Party. He explained to us what their attitude was before the war, and told us what Lord Kimberley had advised the Party to do. For about ten minutes he spoke about the Army, and during five of those minutes he put a series of conundrums—more or less algebraical problems—in connection with the British Army, and then proceeded to close his speech with a personal attack on the Secretary of State for War. I confess I shall be surprised if your Lordships take the view that is worthy of the wording of the Motion which the noble Earl has placed on the Paper.

The noble Duke has referred to one or two points in connection with Army administration which I will deal with later. I feel that I should like to be able to tell the noble Earl, as Mr. Balfour told Mr. Asquith, that he had put the question of Army administration in a nutshell, and to reply to him on some definite and clear point. Mr. Asquith in his speech said that not so much depended on the division that was to be taken as on the tenor of the debate In your Lordship's House both these factors have their independent significance. It has often happened that the House of Lords has shown itself more independent of political or Party considerations than the House of Commons. Your Lordships have no local caucuses or political contests to consider, and the public therefore feel that the division and the debate in this House will help to settle a long controversy concerning Army administration, which has been carried on in a somewhat confused manner, and which the noble Earl has in no way helped to elucidate, and they hope to gain some light from the attitude which is adopted by your Lordships. The noble Earl has asked me to state whether the number of recruits given by the Secretary of State includes those refused by the Medical Board.

*EARL CARRINGTON: Whether the gross number of men recruited is given, or whether the number of men dropped through desertion or through being declared medically unfit is taken into consideration.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: My right hon. friend gave the number of recruits taken during the last year, and, of course, the Army system is such that of these recruits some will be cast aside on account of illness, some on account of bad conduct, and some on account of drunkenness. The total of 52,000 men does not mean that we have got that number of soldiers who will be absolutely efficient. I believe the points on which the public wish to be directed, and the points which I and my right hon. friend the Secretary of State would like the decision of this House upon, are three. First, is the limit at which my right hon. friend the Secretary of State has fixed the establishment of the Regular forces of this country too high? Secondly, assuming that it is not too high, is the Army Corps organisation the most suited for working out and developing the Army's fullest capacity? And thirdly, if it is the most suited, has the Government done everything in its power to make that Army Corps system effective? Those are the three points of importance. As regards the question whether the regular establishment is too high, it would be presumption in me to attempt to give the House any strategical reasons for the necessity of having three Army Corps for foreign service. The Prime Minister stated the other night in the House of Commons what the Cabinet policy was, and he referred to the necessity of having a large number of soldiers ready and available for service in India. I can only say from the short experience I had at the India Office, and the knowledge which I was then able to gain as to the requirements of India, I am perfectly confident that the Prime Minister only expressed the feeling of every man who is at all capable of expressing an opinion as to the requirements that might arise in certain eventualities.

Well, my Lords, it is stated that we do not want an Army to send abroad, that we can rely absolutely on the Navy, that the Navy is to take the offensive, and that no Army can possibly be required. It is perfectly true that the Navy will take the offensive, and that in nine cases out of ten the Army will be only supplementary to the Navy, but there are cases in which the Navy will be supplementary to the Army. We have had experience before now of sudden and unexpected demands made upon us. We had to send a large number of men to America during the War of Independence. We had to send 200,000 men abroad during the Napoleonic Wars; in the Crimea we had 150,000 men abroad; during the Indian Mutiny we had a force of 96,000 men abroad; and in the South African War, 350,000 men. That shows, I think, that we may at any time find it necessary to send a force abroad; and I am bound to say that when I listened a few nights ago to Lord Rosebery's speech on the Venezuelan question, when he told us of the antipathy, rancour and jealousy of Europe against this country, I could not help feeling that instead of three Army Corps we ought to be in a position to send abroad considerably more. If the noble Earl holds the opinion that the hatred of this country is so great abroad, he will hardly vote against the proposals that His Majesty's Government have put forward for securing a force sufficient and fully trained for any possible emergency. I venture to say that the duty of the Secretary of State in considering this matter of the number of men we ought to be in a position to send abroad, has been not only to consider the probabilities, but also the possibilities. He has had to take the advice of his military advisers, and the military authorities are unanimously of opinion that we cannot possibly do with a smaller number of men than are contained in the first three Army Corps for service abroad.

I should like to say a word or two with regard to the Intelligence Department. That Department has been strengthened, and the status of the Director-General of Military Intelligence is second to no one of the military heads at the War Office. It is the desire of the Secretary of State to strengthen that Department in every possible way. As far back as November last he appointed a Committee, of which I have the honour to be Chairman, to consider the requirements of the Department in the future. That Committee has just completed its report, and there are certain recommendations contained in it as to the increase of the establishment provided in the Estimates. The Committee of National Defence has as one of its members the Director-General of Military Intelligence. That will no doubt throw a considerable amount of extra work on the Intelligence Department, and for that reason we shall have to consider whether or not extra officers should be added to the strength of the Department. There is one point that I should like to make clear to the House. It is that the Intelligence Department, which has in the past been very much criticised, is not by any means lacking in those qualities in respect of which it is supposed to have been deficient. It is not right for me to anticipate in any way the Report of the Royal Commission, but I think I may say, from the knowledge and experience that I have had and the papers I have seen since I have been at the War Office, that the Commission will not find that the information that was provided by the Intelligence Department prior to the South African War was lacking in judgment or in accuracy. I think it is only just to the distinguished officer who was then at the head of the Intelligence Department that that statement should be made. The Intelligence Department has been brought so much before the public, and so much is expected of it in the future, that I venture to assert that the advice which the Intelligence Department will tender will not be in the direction of a reduction of our Regular forces, but rather the contrary.

I come now to the second point—Is the Army organisation best suited to our military needs? Now, there are certain points which I would like to bring before your Lordships' attention with regard to Army organisation. The first object of the Army Corps system is to decentralise work, to provide for the better training of officers in the highest duties of administration and command, to give better facilities for the organisation of troops for expeditionary purposes, and to assimilate conditions existing in peace to those existing in war. The noble Earl has told us that this system interferes with recruiting for the Navy. I do not know on what evidence he has made that statement, and I should like your Lordships to disabuse your minds that the Army Corps organisation has any connection with the number of men we have at present, or will involve the country in any extra expense. The only difference in the cost of the present system as compared with the system of the past is that one or two generals and their staffs are added to the establishment of the Army. It is really a misnomer to talk about the Army Corps as a system; it is merely a question of the distribution of troops. This system of distribution of troops has existed in India for many years, and has been found to work admirably. Assuming, as I have stated, that it is necessary to send three Army Corps abroad, it is necessary to have these troops highly trained and efficient. I do not think it matters whether we call them Army Corps or by any other name.

You have only three places—Aldershot, Salisbury Plain, and Ireland—where any body of troops can be trained. Therefore, if you divide a force of three Army Corps, which consists of ·135,000 men, into three parts, one-third would have to be trained at Aldershot, another on Salisbury Plain, and the other third in Ireland. Therefore it is absolutely necessary that you should have a general in command of each of those three districts, and whether they are called Army Corps or commands is really immaterial. What are the advantages that an Army Corps organisation affords? It gives greater facilities for training, and security that the proper proportion between the various arms and departmental services is permanently maintained. In 1888 the Government took stock of their military resources, and found that though they had an Infantry sufficient for three Army Corps, they were lacking in Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, and Departmental services. Now we have a definite organisation to work up to, and I honestly believe that the system which has been adopted by the Secretary of State, with the full support and hearty co-operation of the military authorities, is one that will prevent deficiencies such as I have referred to being overlooked in the future. It is generally admitted that one of the great evils of the past Army administration has been centralisation—centralisation which it is no exaggeration to say has filtered from the War Office down to battalions and to companies. By the present scheme decentralisation is encouraged, and after a little time I believe the War Office will have been relieved of many petty and daily routine details which could be far more effectively and conveniently performed by the generals and their staff officers on the spot.

Then there is another point where I think it will be admitted that the Army Corps system will be of great use. It will teach officers that initiative and independence, which it is perfectly impossible for them to show on active service if they have not been encouraged to display it in time of peace; and if the Army Corps organisation is now, after so much has been done towards giving effect to it, to be done away with, it is absolutely certain that we shall revert to the old system of centralisation with all its attendant abuses. It has been alleged against the Army Corps system that it is incompatible with the power of rapidly organising a comparatively small expeditionary force, say from 5,000 to 25,000 men, for immediate despatch abroad. The contrary is the case. In 1888 we had an Army Corps system. That seems now to have been forgotten, but that system only came into force on mobilisation. Therefore, when it is said that it will be inconvenient to detach a given number of troops from one Army Corps for foreign service, the same argument might equally have been applied to detaching a certain number of troops previous to the present scheme. An Army Corps consisted in the past of a given number of units on mobilisation. If you had to send a certain number of troops abroad, so many units had to be taken away from the Army Corps, with the consequence that when you had to mobilise the Army Corps it would be minus the units that had gone. We claim that under the present system that difficulty will not arise, because, if at any time say 10,000 or 12,000 men are taken away from the First Army Corps for service abroad, there will be no difficulty in replacing those men from the Reserve nucleus that we have of 40,000 British troops in the country, or it may even be completed by auxiliary forces, who would naturally fall into the duties they had to perform far easier if they had the example of the remaining part of the Corps. I could pursue that point a good deal more in detail, but I do not wish to trouble the House at too great length.

It has been asked—What is to be the position in this country after the first three Army Corps have gone abroad? Well, the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Army Corps will remain as the Field Army for home defence. The noble Earl has accused me of having said that these Army Corps were chiefly on paper. It is perfectly true that I made that remark, but I now have the opportunity, which I gladly avail myself of, of explaining in detail what I actually said in addition. I said I did not understand what the charge as to the Army Corps being paper Army Corps really meant. I said—

> "If you are referring to the first three Army Corps, I suppose you mean that they cannot go on active service unless the Reserves are called up, and inasmuch as the Reservists are not actually serving with the Colours, they are to that extent on paper."

I said, as regards the last three Army Corps—

> "If the fact that they consist largely of Auxiliary forces—Volunteers and Militia, who are not constantly in barracks and not constantly attached to the Corps—is what you refer to when you say they are on paper, I agree that they are chiefly on paper; but when the Secretary of State introduced the scheme he stated perfectly clearly that the last three Army Corps would comprise 60,000 Volunteers and Militia."

Some 25,000 to 30,000 men of the Regular troops will form the nucleus of the last three Army Corps, and will constitute the Field Army for such duties as they may be called upon to perform.

It has been said that the Auxiliary forces quartered in the southern part of England are not included in the last three Army Corps. That, again, is perfectly true, but they have the most important duties possible allocated to them. They form on mobilisation the bodies of troops that will do garrison duty and be quartered in the three most important dockyards — Portsmouth, Devonport and Chatham—and it would be folly to include these troops in an Army Corps which is purposely for field service, when their duties are of an absolutely contrary nature. The Auxiliary forces in the southern part of England are trained in peace time for those garrison duties which they will have to perform in time of war. Whatever may be said as to the Army Corps organisation, I have not the slightest hesitation in affirming that this is the first time in our history that a serious attempt has been made to organise the Auxiliary forces, and to teach them the duties in peace time that they will have to perform in war.

I come now to the third point which I raised—Have the Government done what they could to make the Army organisation effective? and on that point I would call your Lordships' attention to the fact that it was only two years ago that this scheme was proposed and sanctioned by Parliament. In the nature of things the war in South Africa has delayed the return of troops which are necessary to the completion of these Army Corps. The First Army Corps only lacks one battalion of infantry; but barracks are not yet available for all its units, which for some time will have to be stationed in other commands. The moment these barracks are ready the First Army Corps will be complete. The Second Army Corps lacks three regiments of cavalry and six battalions of infantry, for which barracks are not yet available. Four Guards battalions will join from London on mobilisation under normal arrangements, and they have in addition two battalions as surplus. The Third Army Corps lacks one cavalry regiment, three batteries of militia artillery, three heavy batteries, and two battalions of infantry, but they have five surplus batteries. The Fourth Army Corps only lacks in Regulars three batteries now in South Africa. The Auxiliary troops are complete except for six militia batteries, and there is a surplus of seven battalions and one cavalry regiment belonging to the First and Second Army Corps. Consequently the general who commands the Fourth Army Corps will have actually more troops under his command than any of the other generals. With regard to the Fifth Army Corps, the Regular and Auxiliary forces are complete, except for three batteries of Militia artillery. Two of the Regular batteries are at the present time quartered in Ireland. The Sixth Army Corps lacks twelve battalions of Royal Artillery, now abroad, and has three quartered in Ireland. The other Regulars and the Auxiliary troops are complete except for six militia batteries, not yet raised, and there is a surplus of one cavalry regiment and one infantry battalion belonging to the First Army Corps. I think that gives the House a clear idea of what the position of the Army Corps is at the present time.

The only other point I would like to draw the attention of the House to is the exact establishment that we have, and to which the noble Earl referred, viz., the 259,000 men. That figure, given by the Secretary of State in the House of Commons, included the troops in India. It is suggested that we should reduce our forces by 20,000 or 30,000 men. If it is contemplated that it would be necessary at any time to send out three Army Corps for service abroad, it would be folly if we attempted to reduce by 20,000 or 30,000 men our existing forces. Take the Home Army of this country at 150,000 men, and the Reserve at 60,000; that gives a total of 210,000 men. From this we must deduct 13,000 for garrison duty, 15,000 sick, and 30,000 recruits, 4,000 depôts, and the first three Army Corps 135,000, making a total of 197,000. On mobilisation that would leave us a force of 21,000 men as the nucleus of our three Home Army Corps. If the first three Army Corps were sent abroad we should only have sufficient recruits left in this country to send out our first line of drafts. If it is necessary to have this Army Corps for service abroad, I think the House will admit that it would be folly to consider a large reduction until we have greatly increased our Reserve.

Before sitting down I should like to point out to the House what it will be pronouncing if it gives a vote to-night adverse to His Majesty's Government. It will, first of all, declare that the Government have not done what it could to make the Army Corps organisation effective. I admit that that is a matter of opinion. I have done my best to give your Lordships the facts, and you have them before you. Secondly, it will pronounce that the scheme of Army organisation is not suitable to the requirements of the country. Well, I maintain that if the House comes to that decision, it necessarily follows that someone should be prepared to put forward an alternative scheme, because it does not seem to me fair to the Government to condemn one scheme without putting forward another. It may be statesmanlike to condemn one scheme in favour of another, but it is not statesmanlike or common-sense to condemn one scheme in favour of nothing. I maintain that it must be one scheme or another, and any noble Lord who has not made up his mind what scheme he advocates for the British Army, is not, in my humble judgment, entitled to vote against the Government this evening. Thirdly, by giving a vote against the Government, the House will pronounce that the Regular force organised for service abroad is too large for the requirements of the Empire. The House, if it takes that line, will be coming to a very serious decision, and will be practically directing the Government to reduce the strength of the Army. If that course is adopted, what will the world say? The noble Lord has referred to the lessons of the war. Well, if we now cut down our Regular forces, I think the world will say that the only lesson that this country has learned from the war in South Africa is that we had too large an Army, too many troops, too good an organisation, too powerful equipment for the responsibilities of this country. That is what I believe will be said if the course proposed is taken, and I venture to hope that the House will reject the Motion.

* Lord MONKSWELL: My Lords, the noble Earl who has just sat down concluded by proposing a very strange constitutional doctrine to the House. He says we are not at liberty to vote against the Government scheme, even if we think it is a bad one, and even if we can prove that it is a bad one, unless we produce to the House a cut and dried scheme which we may consider a better one. Surely such a doctrine has never been heard in Parliament before, that we who are out of office, and who, I suppose noble Lords opposite will say, have not much chance of getting into office very shortly, should ourselves formulate a complete scheme, or swallow any scheme presented by His Majesty's Government. I shall have a word to say later with regard to another astounding suggestion of the noble Lord, that if we vote against the scheme of the Government, foreign countries will think that the only lesson we had learned from our experiences in South Africa was that we had too large an Army before the war broke out. The Motion of the noble Earl behind me asks that the Government should reconsider their scheme of military organisation, having regard to the experience of the war in South Africa and to the naval and military requirements of the Empire. Surely we have a right to know, before

we are asked to sanction this Army Corps system, or even to increase the Army to the extent suggested, in what position the Army stands to the Navy. Before we know that, we are not in a position at all events to unreservedly endorse all that the noble Earl says about the necessity of a larger Army. I noticed that the noble Earl did not say one single word in reference to the statement of the noble Earl behind me, that this scheme was no longer popular in Parliament or in the country. Is it not strange, if this scheme is such a good one and one that proposes an increase in the Army, it is not even popular with the Service Members?

The Secretary of State for War drew a pathetic contrast between the rapturous reception of this scheme two years ago and its condemnation now. It is perfectly true that two years ago when he introduced this scheme it was extremely popular with his own supporters, but we saw through it at once. We never gave our adhesion to the proposal, but the Secretary of State is perfectly right when he says that a very great change has come over public opinion, for the scheme is now generally condemned as wasteful, extravagant and inefficient. The Government profess to be very much surprised at this, but it seems to me that the change is perfectly natural and one that might have been expected. What happened was this. The nation temporarily lost its senses in a delirium of war fever. During that delirium the scheme had only to be big enough and expensive enough to secure acceptance. The bigger and the more expensive the scheme, the more popular it was. The Government are now reaping the natural result of yielding to popular clamour. This disaster following momentary popularity, is well deserved, for this was an ill-digested scheme produced in a time of frantic excitement. The country was angry with the Government for saying that the war was ended when it was only half through, and they found it necessary to conciliate public opinion by bringing forward a scheme of Army reform. This led up to a very dangerous situation. There is no course more calculated to produce reaction against even moderate and necessary expenditure on the Army than to force down the throat of the already overburdened taxpayer a scheme of Army reform in which he does not believe and in which Parliament does not believe. You are doing your best to pull tight the purse-strings of the nation, and to prevent the nation coming forward liberally and supporting a satisfactory and well-thought-out scheme of Army reform. The noble Earl spoke of the three Army Corps going abroad. I should like to know where the noble Earl contemplates sending these expeditions.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I was referring to a remark that was made the other night during the discussion on the Venezuelan question, and I said that if it was true as to the hostility of foreign powers three Army Corps would not be of much assistance to us.

*LORD MONKSWELL: That is what we say. Your scheme is a great deal too big or too little. The noble Earl says that the military authorities are unanimously of opinion that the Army Corps system is a good one and that the increase in the Army is absolutely essential. I do not defer to military opinion in this matter. The size of an Army is a matter that must be decided on policy. If you tell us that you are going on an adventurous policy of landing Army Corps on the Continent, you must have them three times as large as you have now. The noble Earl went on to say that there were certain specific reasons why the Army Corps system was the best, and the first and principal reason was that the system was necessary in order to decentralise the administration of the Army. But why? I cannot understand why it should be necessary to have this system in order to decentralise the administration of the Army. Look at the difficulties you will get into. The Hythe School of Musketry is attached to the Second Army Corps, but it supplies the whole Army. Who is to have the control of the school? Again, it was stated by the Prime Minister that the Army Corps were extremely desirable, because we might have a good deal of work to do in India. He said it enabled troops to be sent to India in an organised condition, but I would point out that in India the Army Corps consist of native troops, stiffened with British. The English

Army Corps sent to India would have to be denuded of those recruits who had not been twelve months in the Service, and you would then have to do away with this precious Army Corps system. You would have to denude your Army Corps of a great many of the men composing it if you wanted to send it to India, and in that case I do not think you would be any better off with this new system. Then we are told that the Army Corps system is essential because we are to train the Volunteers. But is an Army Corps necessary for that purpose? I do not think His Majesty's Government are particularly happy in what they have done with regard to the Auxiliary forces. The Auxiliary forces do not seem to be very pleased with the existing state of things, and I think the Government would be very wise if they took the advice of Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, who said that what we ought to do with the Auxiliary forces was to put them into hard training for a little while, and after they have gone through that, exact very much less training from them.

I am glad to be able to come to a topic as to which I am in complete accord with the noble Earl. I think the first thing His Majesty's Government ought to have done, as the result of experiences gained during the war, was to have greatly increased the Intelligence Department. I venture to think that if the Government had only condescended to take the advice of the Intelligence Department they would have got on very much better in South Africa. The extraordinary thing is that the Department, with such a small sum of money and such a small staff at their disposal, were able to get such valuable information with regard to the Boer armaments before the war, and it is to be regretted that that information was not made use of by the Government.

We ought, I suppose, in any Army scheme to take to heart the lessons of the war. I am only going to suggest that there are two important lessons that ought to be taken to heart. The first is the great superiority, under modern conditions of warfare and with modern weapons, of defence over attack. This is a very important matter, and I should have thought that the superiority of defence over attack having been demonstrated to such an extent in the late war would rather have led His Majesty's Government to the conclusion that so far from its being necessary to strengthen the Home Army, we might be able to somewhat decrease it. The second lesson is a more far-reaching one—viz., that the cultivation of intelligence is necessary in every rank, from the highest to the lowest. In the first place, what you have to do is to get as intelligent recruits as you can; and, in the second place, to cultivate their intelligence while they are in the ranks. The noble Earl said a good deal about recruiting, but surely it is no very great triumph to have got 52,000 recruits—4 per cent. over requirements—considering the state of the country at the time. I refuse to express my opinion as to whether recruiting is or is not in a satisfactory state until I know what sort of men these 52,000 soldiers are. I am afraid that the evidence on that point is unsatisfactory, for recruiting officers report that the recruits who were coming forward were extremely illiterate, and an officer commanding one of the large depôts said the main cause for these young fellows enlisting was hunger, short time employment, and low wages. With the volunteer system of recruiting every Government is, of course, under this difficulty. When trade is bad recruiting is brisk, but the class of recruits you get in these circumstances are just the men who in subsequent years fill the ranks of the deserters and the army prisons, and you are better without them.

Then, again, it seems to me that the recruiting regulations are very faulty, I mean with regard to insisting upon a character with recruits. On that point I must say that the remark of the Secretary of State struck me with amazement. Mr. Brodrick said, "Enquiries as to character have been instituted with considerable advantage in many districts." Why not in all? The Commander-in-Chief the other day wrote a most scathing letter condemning the system of taking recruits without good characters. But here we have the Secretary of State stating that in many districts some regard is paid to the character of recruits. The inference is that in many cases no regard at all is paid to the character of the recruits, and I cannot understand how the Commander-in-Chief could have been flouted in this way by the Secretary of State. It is perfectly true, as the noble Earl has stated, that steps have been taken to encourage recruiting. The attractions include better pay, better barrack accommodation, and less barrack-square drill. This is all very good as far as it goes, but I do not think, even with regard to the comfort, convenience and cleanliness of barracks, that we have gone nearly as far as we ought to go. The other day I went over several common lodging-houses in London of the lowest type, and the superintendent of one of them told me that they compared very favourably, both from the point of view of cleanliness and the way in which they were kept, with the London barracks; and, if I may mention it in this connection, he said that the military authorities had approached him to ascertain the best means of extirpating bugs, and he had been able to give them some very good advice in this direction.

What I complain of is that recruiting is not encouraged by any effort to improve the general education of the soldier while in the ranks. I have time and again called the attention of the House to this subject. I was told when I last brought forward the subject of the education of the soldier for civil life that the experiment had been tried at Woolwich and had failed. The Woolwich experiment was in 1899, four years after the Report of the Select Committee on Employment for Discharged Soldiers and Sailors, who said it might be possible to educate the soldier in a trade during the winter months, but that it would be quite impossible in the summer. That was the opinion of the Select Committee appointed to enquire into this subject, but, instead of following this advice, the authorities at Woolwich began the experiment in March, when it was bound to fail because it was beginning at the wrong time. But in order to make certain that it should be a dead failure the authorities made no enquiry at all as to the state of the education of the soldiers they sent into the trade classes, and the consequence was that they were sent to classes where the education given was so much above their heads that it might as well have been given in the Hebrew tongue. We have had the education of the officer scathingly condemned, but the ignorance of the private soldier is as great a scandal. The old system continues. Initiative and suppleness are drilled out of the soldier. We profess surprise at the difficulty in finding employment for discharged soldiers. Contrast the Army with the Navy. The men in the Navy are known as handy men, and the soldiers as helpless men. Our sailors are handy because they have been trained to suppleness and taught to exercise their intelligence.

If you get your 50,000 recruits they will not be of the right sort and no effort will apparently be made to improve them. If the scheme is pressed the Army will probably be below the establishment and will certainly be inefficient. But then we are told we shall have nothing to do but go in for conscription, and the country will then get plenty of excellent recruits. On that point I am glad to think that up to the present, at all events, His Majesty's Government are standing firm. Only the other day the First Lord of the Admiralty reminded his audience that conscription for foreign service does not obtain in any European country, and I was glad to see that Major Seely in the House of Commons had the courage to say that conscription is a counsel of folly. But for two years past we have been flooded with letters in the Service Press advocating conscription, and I think these gentlemen have no wish to make voluntary recruiting a success, but would welcome its failure as paving the way for conscription. If you refuse to fit the soldier for civil life, if you will stiffen his muscles and stunt his intelligence, if you insist on sending him back to civil life a worse man for civil employment than when he joined the Colours, the Government scheme sooner or later means conscription, and as you cannot get conscription it means that your scheme will fall through. I say that it is reasonable to ask the Government to reconsider their scheme. It was not wise to introduce a large scheme of Army reform during the war. The scheme was got up in a hurry in deference to popular clamour, and during the delirium of war fever. That was not wise, but I do not think the country expects too much of the Government. I do not think the man in the street acknowledges any great intellectual superiority on their part, and I do not think that anybody is in the least surprised to find that the Government did not escape the infection of the war fever. We have been reminded by the Prime Minister that his Party have been making Imperialistic speeches for four years. We do not think hardly of them for that. Many besides Ministers have done that, but when everyone is returning to his senses I think it is reasonable to hope that Ministers will not be the only persons to persist in their errors. It is excusable for Ministers to succumb to a temporary fit of lunacy with the majority of Englishmen, but it is inexcusable for them to boast that they still stand where they did four years ago, though every one else has recovered his senses. National defence is not a subject to be trifled with, and I hope that in considering it Ministers will put away every atom of false pride and obstinacy, and will not, by adhering to their expensive and ill-advised project, run the risk of pulling tight the purse-strings of the nation. I trust that by taking this scheme back they will show that in the matter of national defence they are worthy of the confidence of the people.

Lord LOVAT: My Lords, the noble Lord who has just spoken has thrown down a challenge to your Lordships on the subject of the Army Corps system. Its effect upon the Volunteers has been referred to. I myself think that this is the first system that has been produced which takes into reasonable account the Volunteer force. Volunteers in themselves are very useful men, and Volunteer officers are to be obtained in large numbers if they can be intelligently looked after. The instances where the Volunteers broke down in the late war were entirely due to their not having the right class of people on the staff to manage them. It has been proved that many thousands of men can be secured to fight for their country provided they can be intelligently staffed. This Army Corps system, by producing a definite scheme—

[The noble Lord here abruptly resumed his seat amid sympathetic cheers from both sides of the House.]

* **The Earl of ABERDEEN**: I am sure the House listened with particular interest when the noble Lord who has just sat down rose to address your Lordships. The name of Lovat's Scouts has become a household word, and although my noble friend has ceased to speak at this moment I hope we shall soon have a further opportunity of hearing his views on this subject. I am sure the services he has rendered to the country will always be gratefully remembered. I think it might be expected that any Member addressing your Lordships on this occasion ought to have the qualification of some experience in military matters, either the experience of service in the Army or official experience in connection with the administration of military affairs, and I believe that all the noble Lords who have spoken up to the present come within that category. But although I cannot claim any such qualification, I should like to explain that I rise not so much in the capacity of a critic as that of an inquirer, I might say an anxious inquirer. I quite admit that inquiries very often imply certain criticism, and I admit that the first inquiry I should like to make may come under that head. The question which has been in my mind is as to the principle on which special travelling allowances are made, or are not made, in certain conditions. We have all admired the manner in which the vast number of troops were conveyed 6,000 miles across the sea to South Africa, but I wish to call attention to a much humbler kind of transportation. A man applied for military service in Aberdeen, and was accepted. Aberdeen is a most desirable place, but it has one disadvantage, that it is a considerable distance from London, and that the railway fare is therefore expensive. The man I am referring to had passed a preliminary examination as to his fitness for service and travelled to London to have his full admission arranged for. But when further examination took place in London it was ruled that owing to some defect in his teeth he could not be accepted, and he had to bear the loss of his railway

fare. When he got back you may be pretty sure he did not keep his experience to himself, and such treatment as that cannot but have a bad effect on the class from which you hope to draw recruits.

The question which interests me most of all is that of the Volunteers. My noble friend who opened this debate stated that there had been a diminution during the past two years in the Volunteer force of 70,000 men. That, surely, is a very serious fact. I listened from the Peers' Gallery in the House of Commons the other day to a statement by the Prime Minister in which he emphatically declared that it was his intention to do all that was possible to improve and make efficient the Auxiliary forces. But when we hear of a diminution of 70,000 men we cannot help thinking of the old expression, "improving a thing off the face of the earth." I want to know the method and the principle which will be pursued in this matter. I am sure that Volunteer officers are not afraid of demands for increased efficiency, but their attitude is rather this, that they are confronted with the difficulty of combining compliance with the regulations with the corresponding necessity of securing the adherence of the Volunteers to the new conditions. I have a letter in my hand from a Volunteer officer in which he states that he is receiving serious complaints to the effect that he is requiring too much time to be devoted by his men to the work. He has found it necessary to give a special camp allowance of two shillings a day, in addition to the War Office allowance, and concludes, "if the present regulations are not modified I have no doubt that the membership will decrease very considerably." One cannot help thinking that by some careful rearrangement something might be done to meet some of these difficulties. Of course, if the object is to reduce the total number of Volunteers I can conceive that there might be something to be said for that. If it is really the intention of the Government that there should be a smaller but a more efficient force that policy should be avowedly expressed, because a sort of indirect process of diminution has a discouraging effect, and you cannot be sure that the process secures the survival of the fittest. Therefore I hope we shall hear something further as to the principle and method which it is proposed to continue with regard to the Volunteers.

*LORD HARRIS: My Lords, I should like to direct the attention of the House to one or two points which, as regards the disposition of the forces of the Crown, I think are more important than the cost of a journey from Aberdeen to London, and more nearly relate to the Motion of the noble Earl. The noble Earl the Under Secretary said there were three points upon which the Government would be glad to have a decision—first, whether the establishment of the Army is too high? Secondly, whether the Army Corps system is the best for the distribution of the troops? And, thirdly, if it is, whether the Government have done their best to carry out that system? As regards the first point, it seems to me that that is hardly a question for the Government to put. Surely they are responsible for the numbers in the Army. It is the business of the Cabinet to advise the country what they consider necessary for the safety of the Empire. It is undoubtedly open to the Opposition to challenge that advice, but the Opposition had to accept the Estimates which were put before the House of Commons last year, and we must assume that the numbers that were voted were those which the noble Earl and his colleagues thought to be the right number. I do not understand his asking that question at this moment. I do not think that anyone who has had any interior acquaintance with the administration of India would dare to get up in his place and challenge whatever the Cabinet may say is necessary for the defence of the Empire. It is perfectly well known, I imagine, to all those who have held high administrative posts in India, what the numbers are which the Government of India say they must have if an attack is made on the North-West Frontier—that is to say, what extra number of English troops from England India must have in addition to the troops at present in that country; and I am perfectly certain that His Majesty's Government have had that in mind. Therefore, so far as I am concerned, I am quite satisfied with the number which His Majesty's Government have said are necessary, and I sincerely hope they will not yield to any pressure to reduce those numbers.

Now as to the question of the Army Corps system. The name Army Corps is given to those bodies to which the War Office wish to devolve some of the detailed work which hitherto has occupied too much attention at Headquarters, and I think it is a better name than the alternatives—division, district, or group. I admire the courage which the Secretary for War has shown in carrying out, against much adverse criticism, a scheme for the decentralisation which has been called for. When the transition stage, which always does produce some confusion, is over, I believe there will be greater expedition in dealing with matters of detail. It seems to me hypercritical to challenge the system which Mr Brodrick has introduced, which has been called for for years, and which, I believe, will in a very short time result in considerable expedition in dealing with the many questions that arise in connection with the Army. I hope the Government will not hesitate to ask for what is necessary in respect of the Intelligence Department, for I am sure that even with double its strength the Department could not work out all the requisites for the successful conduct of a war in all the countries where there may be a chance of having to fight.

At the beginning of the South African War I believe not a British officer was capable of estimating the number of troops necessary to guard our lines of communication, so that we might strike at the Boer headquarters; but this was done by a German officer who wrote to *The Times* in November, 1899. He pointed out that the number of troops we then had in South Africa were quite insufficient to enable us to compete with the Boer army at the strength at which we calculated it, and which he believed was under-estimated, and further that we did not possess anything like enough troops for the lines of communication. He stated the numbers which he considered would be necessary, and those numbers were at least double what we then had in South Africa, and even his estimate eventually proved not to be enough. But what struck me as very curious was that no British officer had made anything like an accurate calculation of the number of troops required for the lines of communication in order to enable us to reach Johannesburg. I am certain of this, that if the Intelligence branch had been big enough they would have given attention to a point of this kind, with the result that the Government would have been better advised on this point than they were. Comparisons have been made as regards the size of the Intelligence branch of the German Army and the size of our Intelligence Department. I wonder what the size of the German Intelligence branch would be if they had the risks of war in all parts of the world that we have. I can imagine that it would be a great deal larger. I therefore hope that the Government will see their way to adequately equip this important Department. I think it would be imprudent to place too much dependence on the Defence Committee of the Cabinet, notwithstanding the strengthening it has received by the addition of several expert advisers. The members of the Cabinet who are on that Committee are all busy men with their own Departments to attend to, and I cannot believe they will be able to find all the time that is necessary for the accurate study of the large and intricate questions that will come before them.

Lord Harris.

There is one question of great importance to which I hope it will be possible for the noble Marquess the Foreign Secretary, or some other member of the Government, to give some reply. The question is, "Is it best for the Empire or not that the whole of these Regular troops should be barracked in England?" A scheme has been put forward in *The Times* in which it is suggested that a large force might be stationed in various parts of the Empire. It is a very bold idea; I think myself it is rather crude, and that if it had been subjected to detailed official criticism—to that criticism which knows how many are the needs of the Army—probably it would not have seemed so sound to its author as he thought it when it was propounded. But there is one place, where he suggested that troops should be stationed, that seems to have a great deal of wisdom behind it—and that is that there should be a considerable force, possibly an Army Corps, stationed in South Africa. This, of course, is exclusive of the force which it is necessary at present to retain in South Africa, but which may be reduced in time. One of the points that will inevitably occur to anyone criticising that scheme is the question of transport, in case these troops are required in any other part of the world. It is an undoubted fact that there is no part of the world where transports can be so easily obtained as in England, and therefore the Army Corps that is to go abroad can be put on the necessary shipping quicker in England than anywhere else. But in this case—and it must be remembered that one of the reasons for this large force of Regular troops is the defence of India—the propounder of the scheme in *The Times* assumes the Canal is closed, and therefore that all the transports will have to go round the Cape. In such a case, if it were possible to station an Army Corps in South Africa, I do not think there would be any delay as regards shipping, because the transports could be engaged in England, probably fitted up with some portion of their fittings and stores, call at the Cape, at Port Elizabeth, Durban, and London, pick up their troops, and go on to India without loss of time. That advantage seems to me to apply to an Army Corps stationed in South Africa more than to one stationed in any part of the world. The troops would have far greater facilities for training in South Africa than they could have in this country, and their physique would be greatly improved there. I hope we may receive an assurance that this is a subject which will receive the attention of His Majesty's Government. It is impossible for me to support the motion of the noble Earl opposite, because I believe it to be absolutely unsound from the point of view of the necessities of the Empire.

LORD DENMAN: My Lords, at this late hour I do not intend to detain your Lordships for many minutes. I think it is impossible in this question of Army reform not to refer to a debate which took place the other night in the House of Commons, as this debate is to a certain extent a continuation of that discussion. I find myself, speaking from the point of view of a soldier, almost entirely in agreement with what fell from the noble Lord, the Financial Secretary to the War Office. His scheme, if I remember rightly, was one of modified compulsory service at home and voluntary service abroad. Such a scheme, from the point of view of the soldier, is the one solution of all our difficulties. First of all it solves the problem of recruiting, which the present scheme makes no attempt whatever to touch. It also solves the question of expense—it is cheaper—it enables you to train the Militia and Volunteers, and to bring them to whatever state of efficiency you please. It even solves the question of recruiting for the Navy, which, although it may be quite satisfactory at the present time, will, I think, one day afford a problem which may cause the Government of the day some uneasiness. Speaking from the point of view of the citizen, I realise that any system of compulsory service is now absolutely out of the question.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: Why?

LORD DENMAN: Because when the Government of the day two years ago had the opportunity of giving us a really sound military system they wasted the opportunity and foisted the present scheme on the country. There are two men in this country who have had the chance of putting our Army on a sound basis — the noble Marquess the present Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and the present Secretary of State for War. Whether they were overruled by other members of the Cabinet or not it is impossible for outsiders to know, but they allowed their opportunity to go. What I complain of in the present scheme is that it makes no attempt whatever to solve the problem of recruiting. I quite agree with what fell from the noble Earl the Under Secretary, that it does not matter whether you call these Army Corps, or brigades, or divisions; it is entirely a matter of detail. But it is of importance that you should have a scheme which enables you to get men. The present scheme does not do that. The Secretary of State for War stated in the House of Commons the other night that recruiting for the Army was progressing favourably, but the difficulty of obtaining recruits for the infantry still exists. The Secretary of State told us that the infantry at the present time was only 2,600 below strength, but I should like to ask whether the Government expect in the coming recruiting year to keep their forces up to that figure, and whether at the end of the recruiting year they will not be more than 5,000 men below the strength in the infantry alone.

There was another rather important point in the speech made by the Secretary of State the other night. He told us that for the infantry we had ceased recruiting "specials." The standard now is: height, 5 ft. 3 in., and 32 in. chest measurement; nothing below this is a "special." I do not know whether the noble Earl, the Under Secretary, can tell me what the standard was before the war. I have reason to believe that the standard at the present time for recruits is not the same as that which existed before the war. Naturally if you reduce your standard you will have no "specials" at all. That is perfectly obvious. Perhaps it is not fair to call it a trick on the part of the Secretary of State to make this statement to the country, but at anyrate it is to my mind rather a slim form of Parliamentary tactics. Turning to minor reforms introduced in the present scheme there is one which I think will not tend to the efficiency of the Service—that is the regulation which enables men to stay out all night in plain clothes. In no other walk of life would young men be allowed to stay out all night. Take the undergraduates at Cambridge or the cadets at Sandhurst; it would be entirely out of the question. There is a line written by Mr. Rudyard Kipling, and a very true one, that

> "Single men in barracks ain't exactly plaster saints,"

and you may enact the introduction of cubicles, you may go further in the same direction and enact that flower boxes be placed in the windows of all barrack rooms, and china ornaments on the mantel-pieces, but still you will not do very much to elevate the moral tone of the recruit. What will happen will be that you will get your recruit coming back in the small hours of the morning either sodden with drink or having spent the greater part of the night in doubtful company.

There is one other point I should like to touch upon, namely, the dress regulation; and after the criticisms I have endeavoured to make it is a pleasure to turn to a subject on which I am able to offer my congratulations to the War Office and to His Majesty's Government. Their efforts in this direction are really deserving of the highest praise. It is impossible to overrate the skill, care, ingenuity, and the fertility of imagination that have been brought to bear on this very important question. Possibly to some of us it may be a matter of regret that this care and thought expended in the year 1902 on the inscription on a button, or on the pattern of a forage cap that looks as if it had been made in Germany, was not in 1901 given to the enrolment and enlistment of mounted troops to send out to fight our battles at the Cape. I wish to touch for a moment upon the question of the relations between the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State for War. It appears, as far as one can judge at present, that this system can hardly be termed satisfactory. I do not wish to imply that the relations between the Secretary of State and the Commander-in-Chief are not of the most cordial description. We have been told that they are. But the other day we had the incident of the Newmarket election, where the decision of the Commander-in-Chief was overruled by the Secretary of State. As the noble Earl the Commander-in-Chief is present in this House, I will say at once, with all due respect and sincerity, that it is difficult to imagine a Secretary of State for War being unable to get on with him, famed as he is for his charm of disposition. But it seems to me that a system can hardly be a good one which does not remove all possibility of friction and prevent the recurrence of such an incident as the one to which I have referred. We must admit that it is possible that a Commander-in-Chief may one day be appointed who has not the charming disposition of the noble Earl, Lord Roberts, and that there should arise a Secretary of State who does not possess the fascinating personality of the present War Minister. And it seems to me that you ought to have a system which will obviate the recurrence of such scenes as we saw not so very long ago in your Lordships' house.

Finally, I protest against this scheme because I think it is unfair to the Army. In the British Army there are regiments which have records such as no other army or regiment in the world can equal. I ask your Lordships whether it is fair to those regiments to fill up their ranks with men of the size you are now enlisting. I protest against it on that account. I am aware, as every thinking Englishman must be aware, that our Navy is the first line of defence. But, after all, it is only fair to judge by results.

Since the Battle of Trafalgar, although the British Navy has done splendid work in small actions, it has fought no very great war. Your Army during that time has fought and conquered in every part of the world. For that alone you owe it a debt of gratitude, and for that reason, if for no other, I ask you to register your vote against a scheme which is unfair to the people of this country and unfair to the Army which has done so much to build up this great Empire.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (The EARL of SELBORNE): My Lords, the Motion is an official declaration of want of confidence on the part of His Majesty's Opposition in His Majesty's Government, and I ask your Lordships whether, in the whole of your experience, you have ever known such a Motion followed up by such a debate? Has any one single speaker on the other side attempted to deal with the real subject—"The naval and military requirements of the Empire?" The only allusion there has been to the military requirements was in the very brief speech of the Duke of Bedford; there has not been a single word about the naval requirements. I protest that it is not consistent with the dignity of this House or of Parliament that such a Motion should be followed up by such a debate. I would say, in the first place, that at the beginning of this question —not the end of it—is the Navy; and here you have an Opposition which you would imagine, so far as the speeches in this House are concerned, did not know that the Navy existed. Lord Rosebery, who I am sorry to say has left the House, is always endeavouring to stimulate the Government to a proper view of their duties in these matters. We have had the gospel of efficiency preached to us until it has become a little stale; but here we have the Opposition and, I presume, Lord Rosebery coming forward to support a Motion like this and not a word said about the Navy or the naval requirements of the country. I will not go behind the arguments that a certain section of political speakers are fond of delivering themselves of in respect of that Armageddon that might come if all the Powers of the world were to combine against the Navy to defeat it. I do not think such a discussion would be profitable, and I for one do not belong to the checkmate school. I do not believe that a man is beaten until he has been either killed or taken prisoner.

But for the purposes of this debate I ask your Lordships to take this as the starting-point—that the true defence of this country, and of the whole Empire, is its naval power, and that the invasion which we have to contemplate and take into reckoning in connection with the military system is only such an invasion as is possible so long as our naval power remains intact. I am not going to proceed from that basis to consider how many Regular troops must be kept in this country for the purpose of repelling such an invasion. And why? Because I believe that you should begin at the other end and calculate what are the number of Regular troops you will require for the Imperial defence of the Empire outside this country. You have to provide a garrison for all the coaling stations and the ports we hold. You have to provide a garrison for South Africa. You have to provide that force which is always, sooner or later, required for minor expeditions. And, beyond and above all this, you have to provide for the defence of India. When you have calculated on the basis of those requirements, I believe you will find that the number of Regular troops required in England to enable the Army to fulfil Imperial obligations in India and the Colonies is amply sufficient, with the auxiliary forces, to deal with such an invasion as I have suggested. If your Lordships agree with that basis of calculation, I ask what are you to do with those Regulars thus proved to be required and with the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers? I suppose we are all agreed that that force ought to be organised in the best possible manner, and not left in the position of a mere collection of disjointed units. I suppose your Lordships will further admit that there cannot be within the kingdom too much decentralisation in the way of relieving the War Office from all work of organisation and administration which can be placed on some other official shoulders. Then, I ask, wherein does the

Army Corps system fail in fulfilling those requirements? I ask, also, will it be denied that the Army Corps system can provide reinforcements for India in time of need? Lord Monkswell tried to make out that because the Indian Army was organised in rather a different way from the British Army, therefore there could be no place in an Indian emergency for reinforcements by Army Corps. What is there to prevent an Army Corps being sent to India as one complete unit? I also submit that it would be possible to take out of an Army Corps, in a complete unit such as a division or a brigade, any expeditionary force which might be required for small emergencies abroad.

The system of Army Corps may be good or bad; it may be possible to suggest a better plan. But I submit that the burden of proof, which rests upon the Opposition, to demonstrate that the system fails to supply what is required in the interest of the Empire has broken down. For supplying the reinforcements for India, for the formation of a first-class Army Reserve, for the maintenance of garrisons, for the fitting out of small expeditionary forces, and for decentralisation, the Army Corps is a convenient unit. Why, also, is it not convenient for the Militia, the Yeomanry, the Volunteers, and the Regulars intended for the defence of our shores to be worked in Army Corps? I protest that the whole discussion on our military system has gone off the rails owing to the undue prominence which is given to the question of Army Corps. The real point is whether the men required for the purposes of the Empire can or cannot be supplied under the system; whether there are too many Regulars, and whether it is a sufficiently elastic system. The noble Earl who introduced the Motion made the amazing statement that the Army Corps system interfered as a rival with the Navy both as to men and as to money. On what authority does the noble earl make that statement?

*EARL CARRINGTON: On the authority of common-sense. If there are two people in the market, each wanting as many men as they can obtain, it is obvious that they will compete; and that they both will try to get as much of the public money for their particular service as they possibly can. Therefore they must be mutually prejudicial.

*THE EARL OF SELBORNE: The Army Corps system has not interfered in the slightest degree with the Navy, either in men or money. The Board of Admiralty have received from the Government all that they require in the way of money and men. The question of the Committee of Defence has also been referred to. The Government do not claim that the Committee of Defence as re-constituted is going to cure all the evils it is intended to meet off-hand; but we do say that it is a Constitutional departure of great importance. Hitherto the experts, naval and military, have not been members of the Committee of Defence. They have been simply called in to advise when required. Henceforth they will be integral members of the Committee, and will have the same status and the same rights as the politicians. The Committee will thresh out all questions affecting national defence, no matter what time or labour may be involved; and their decisions will be recorded and handed down from one Government to another, so that in respect to all matters which come before them there will be absolute continuity of record. But to return to the Army Corps, the only criticism I have heard of the system is that it is not complete. I entirely agree that the Army Corps system should be completed by the addition of the absolutely necessary services. What should be aimed at is not numbers, but quality. The Army should be so composed and so organised that, whatever its numbers are, those numbers shall be real men, ready to be put into the field in any emergency. The indictment is a root-and-branch indictment against the Army system; and the real gist of it has been the numbers. The Government stand on these principles—the Navy first, the Army sufficient for its Imperial needs and organised in all detail. The Government have adopted the Army Corps system because they think it lends itself to these requirements, and I altogether fail to find how the criticisms we have up to the present heard have in any way destroyed that position.

*EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I agree with the noble Lord that this is a highly important matter, and that it is right that we who challenged the House with a Resolution should say something more with regard to the reasons why this Motion has been put down. The First Lord of the Admiralty has rather taxed this side of the House with not having brought forward an argument of sufficient weight. I do not see that the other side have done very much more. We had an interesting speech from a very distinguished Yeomanry officer and an ex-Under Secretary for War, for whom I have very high respect, Lord Harris. We have had now a very able speech from the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty; but I quite admit that the House has not responded with speeches to the call we have made as eagerly as we rather hoped it would have done. I am afraid I shall not be able, particularly at this hour, to stir up or revive interest in the matter, but I must endeavour to put the case as it seems to me. In the first instance, let me say that the history of the opposition to the plan of the Government shows that this is in no sense a Party question. Take what happened in another place. The whole brunt, or nearly the whole brunt, of the discussion was borne by supporters of His Majesty's Government, although, no doubt, there were members of the Opposition who took part in the debate. I rejoice that this is not a Party question. We have enough of Party questions; and, although we may think it right to attack the policy of His Majesty's Government, it is not we only who do so, but some very able men who know a good deal of the subject. It is as important a subject as could possibly be brought before Parliament, not only important with regard to the immediate question of the defence of the United Kingdom of India, of the colonies, and of the coaling stations, but important because of the way in which it influences interests of great moment to this country. It affects political interests; it affects moral interests; and it affects very greatly the financial interests of this country.

Sufficient prominence has not, I often think, been given in these debates to the one point of paramount importance, the necessity of knowing what is the policy of His Majesty's Government, with regard to foreign affairs, but also with regard to the colonies. We know the famous saying of Lord Beaconsfield in this House (I had the honour of hearing it) when the question of Afghanistan and India was discussed. He said:—"The key of India is in London." What was the meaning of that? It meant that the foreign and colonial policy of the Government decided and regulated these important issues. I do not for a moment say that His Majesty's Government share the extreme view which, I am sorry to say, from time to time within the last few years has been held in the Press and by Members of Parliament and others with regard to what should be the policy of this country. There has been a great deal of what is called war fever; a military spirit has been evoked; and there has been a great tendency to desire that we should seize upon countries, that we should go to war, and that England should be put with regard to its Army on the same footing as many of the great countries on the Continent. I deeply regret it. Such a policy is wholly opposed to the best political interests of this country, and I am exceedingly sorry that such a spirit should be encouraged. I am not going into the question of the South African War and our policy with regard to it. All I will say is this: that I most devoutly hope, and I trust your Lordships share that hope, that we shall not for many generations have to endure the struggle and privations and responsibilities which that war has brought upon us. I sincerely trust that we shall not have to have recourse to the gigantic, patriotic, and noble efforts that were made not only by the citizens of the United Kingdom, but in South Africa and in other colonies to support the forces of our Sovereign in a very severe campaign. From what I heard in another place from the Prime Minister, I conclude that he refused to adopt the views to which I have referred. I do not know whether the Secretary of State for War agrees with the Prime Minister; but in a remarkable statement which he made before the Colonial Conference he certainly used words which might be interpreted as indicating that we were likely to require forces such as we had sent into South Africa. He said we had only to look at the illustration of the late war to recognise that the arrangements now being made were under, rather than over, the mark.

The noble Lord very properly alluded to the Navy; but it is satisfactory that the position which must be occupied by the Navy in our system of defences is acknowledged on all hands. I will venture to read what the noble Lord himself said at the Colonial Conference, or contributed as a memorandum. He said:—

> "The sea is all one, and the British Navy, therefore, must be all one; and its solitary task in war must be to seek out the ships of the enemy wherever they are to be found and destroy them. At whatever spot, in whatever sea, these ships are found and destroyed there the whole Empire will be simultaneously defended in its territory, its trade, and its interests. If, on the contrary, the idea should unfortunately prevail that the problem is one of local defence, and that each part of the Empire can be content to have its allotment of ships for the purpose of the separate protection of an individual spot, the only possible result would be that an enemy who had discarded this heresy and combined his fleets would attack in detail and destroy those separate British squadrons which, united, could have defied defeat."

That admirably puts the position, and we ought to bear it in mind. It appears to me that in this scheme it has been for the moment overlooked. It does not seem that the first line of defence has been sufficiently considered, and that the Army scheme has been formulated as if that line of defence had never existed. That is why I for one cannot subscribe to the eulogiums that have been passed on the scheme. The scheme is not consistent with what is the best system for the defence of the United Kingdom and the Empire at large. I at once admit that we have to find the forces. First of all we have to find forces for India, for the Colonies, and also for South Africa—I am afraid mcuh larger forces in the latter case than hitherto. We have also to find forces for the coaling stations, and I must in this congratulate the First Lord of the Admiralty on the decision which I see he has made for the Government, that the coaling stations are not to be put in charge of the Marines. Besides that we have other duties to perform. We have to find a sufficient force to feed those forces abroad. Then we must have a certain force to assist the Navy in striking a blow abroad, if it is desired to do so—that was laid down by the First Lord of the Treasury the other night. We need also to have a certain force to help to strengthen or stiffen—if you like to call it so—the defensive force of the country.

But, my Lords, what I maintain is this, that the Government have not relied sufficiently on the auxiliary forces, which must be the bulk, or the majority, of forces on which we must depend for our defence. These are the Volunteers, the Yeomanry, and the Militia. I will say something presently about the Army Corps; at present I am only going to deal with numbers, because after all I admit that it is one of the principal things whether you have overdone the numbers that you require. I conceive that you have. It is very difficult to find out what has really been done. I see various statements made with regard to what Mr. Brodrick's plan was when he introduced it in 1901—what it was then and what it is now. This is not an easy matter to follow. I do not know whether it is worth while going into it, but it would certainly be interesting to know how the two statements which Mr. Brodrick has made can be entirely reconciled. Now in 1901 the Secretary of State for War says this:

> "The net result of our proposal is this. We free a very considerable body of Regulars from garrison service for field service."

That I believe has gone to the wall.

***THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): No, no.

***EARL SPENCER**: I thought that referred to the five battalions released from the coaling stations.

***THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE**: No. It refers to the men of the garrison regiments.

***EARL SPENCER**: I certainly thought that this referred to the battalions for the coaling stations, but the plan for the garrison regiments is a very excellent one. Mr. Brodrick further said—

> "We make up our Militia to war strength; we provide adequate artillery and mounted troops for all our Army Corps; we train better the Volunteers, who are to be given special grants. We shall have an additional number of Regulars—namely, 11,500; we shall have 50,000 more Militia in the new Militia Reserve; we shall have 25,000 more Yeomanry; and we shall have 40,000 more trained Volun-

teers. The net addition under my scheme will be 126,500 men, and that, even allowing £60,000 for the staff of the new Army Corps, will be achieved by an expenditure of a little under £3,000,000."

The other day the Secretary of State for War made a statement I cannot reconcile with this, and it is certainly important. I do not know whether his statement refers to the plan as laid down in 1901. He said—

> "It is absolutely impossible to charge to the Army Corps Scheme more than 5,000 out of the 54,000 men added to the Regular Army in the last six years."

I thought that referred to the first plan introduced in 1901.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: No, No.

*EARL SPENCER: I am glad to be corrected. With regard to the Militia I cannot ascertain the position. Perhaps the noble Marquess who is to speak later (indicating the Marquess of Lansdowne) will tell us whether the Militia Reserve has succeeded, and whether we have got the number it should reach. I wish entirely to approve of, and I should like to give my commendation, for what it is worth, to that scheme, because I have had in my time considerable experience of the Militia, and I know that it will be an enormous thing for the Militia to feel that they are not always training men who are to be drained off towards the Army. I therefore welcome the plan which has been started. My Lords, with regard to the Volunteers I may be prejudiced in their favour. I was one of the first Volunteers who raised any men at all in the year 1859. My noble friend beside me (Lord Wemyss) and I were the first who instituted rifle shooting and made it one of the arms and pastimes of this country, a matter which I think has been of enormous importance to the country and the Army, and has enabled us to go through wars with far greater success than we ever should have done, simply because these men got better arms and more skill in their use. Instead of adding to the Volunteers my noble friend says that they have been diminished by 70,000. No contradiction is made to this. With regard to the Yeomanry, I am glad to think that we have now a considerable force. But we have not anything like the number that the Secretary of State for War promised us. He said there would be an addition of 35,000 Yeomen. Well, there were 10,000 originally, and I think now we are about 14,000 short of the number promised. I should like to have these points explained, if it is worth while, to-night, because they are points of considerable importance as bearing upon the whole of this subject.

My Lords, I must now refer to the Army Corps. Up to the present I have hardly used the term. I was rather glad to hear in the debates and read in the papers that the term "Army Corps" is dying a natural death—that is, disappearing. Certainly the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty did vivify the term to some extent, and at another moment he said the term is of no use at all. I hope the term will not continue long. I do not myself think that an Army Corps, which is supposed to be a congregation of troops under particular generals, with all its organisation, is at all suited for what we require in this country. What is the use of an Army Corps which has been trained by officers, if, when it is sent abroad and the moment it lands at Cape Town, or wherever it is sent, it is at once dispersed. I have heard it stated that there was an Army Corps sent out to South Africa which had been carefully trained and held together, but the moment it landed there was a cry for assistance everywhere, and all the regiments were scattered before the noble and gallant Earl Lord Roberts went out, and never saw each other again. Take another point with regard to Army Corps. Suppose the Army Corps that are to go abroad are to be in the South of England. If there arises a necessity for sending those three Army Corps abroad, the whole of that part of the country will be denuded of Regular troops. What will happen then? It is the very part of the country which you want the generals and soldiers to know something about, because if there should be such a thing as a raid, it would be made, as I imagine, on the South of England. The result would be that not only would all the generals and troops trained in the South of England, with such care and pride, be scattered, but all the Army Corps in the rest of England would be moved and changed in order to reinforce the South of England. I do not want to dwell long on Army Corps, because I believe that Army Corps are nearly exploded.

I quite agree with the First Lord of the Admiralty that we really have to consider whether the troops demanded for the Regular Army are excessive. We are in a more difficult position as mere critics, because the Government have all the expert opinion as to what is required for the Army and Navy, but from the information which comes to our ears, and from what I hear, it seems that even supposing that 120,000 Regulars are sent away, the Regulars remaining in England would be far more numerous than we required. If that be so it is a very serious matter. The question of finance in this country is becoming a very grave one indeed. You cannot exaggerate the importance which the financial position of this country is now assuming when we think that a few years ago—I forget how many—we were astonished if the total of our expenditure amounted to £100,000,000. Now, when we have an increase in the public expenditure of all sorts—Civil Service, Army, Navy, etc.—it amounts to the same sum. I do not for a moment say that this country, with its great resources, is going rapidly into bankruptcy, but I think this enormous expenditure may bring very serious disasters upon us. It therefore behoves everybody who has the interest of the public at heart, and who is in public life, to investigate this expenditure, and scan every item most narrowly, so that we should not fall, as sometimes happens after we have been obliged to spend great sums, into carelessness about expenditure. This is sometimes the case in private life, and I think it is also the case in public life. We have been obliged, I do not say unnecessarily, to spend millions and millions during the war, and the public have become accustomed to hearing of five millions for this, ten millions for that and twenty millions for something else, and they may have become careless about economy, and that, I think, may lead us to very grave results.

There is one thing I ought to refer to; no doubt it is a matter of great importance because it was referred to by the Prime Minister in a very powerful way the other night. It seemed to me as if it were very much of an afterthought. This scheme seemed to me at first to be based entirely on Home defence, but when the attack on it became serious it seemed that India was brought into far greater prominence in order to defend the scheme of the Government and the reserve which they demanded. No one would wish more than I do to see that a proper defence of India is secured, and that everything is done to secure our frontier, but unless there is something very serious behind—some question of policy—which I sincerely trust is not the case, I cannot for the life of me understand why at the present moment a greater force is required for the defence of India than was needed a few years ago. I do not pretend to have a great knowledge of these matters, but one has to hear what experts say regarding them, and I cannot see why it is that a great line of defence, the North-West Frontier, is not stronger now than it was a few years ago. My Lords, so far as I know, the experiences of the war in South Africa have shown us that defence is a much more easy thing now than offence, and that the new system of guns, with their enormous range and great penetration and power, has added enormously to the power of defence. Surely that ought to count for something on the North-West Frontier. We know that a great deal has been done on the other side, in Central Asia, with regard to railroad communications, but have we not had the same thing on the other side of the Frontier? Is not the approach to the North-West Frontier from our side enormously improved and increased? I cannot myself really believe that we are in a very much more dangerous position and are requiring more troops in India now than we were a few years ago.

There are one or two other points, but I hardly like to dwell on them. I must apologise to your Lordships for having kept your Lordships so long, but I did not like to let this debate on such an important subject go by without saying something, and I only trust that His Majesty's Government will realise what a serious position we are in financially and in many other ways, and if they feel that some retrenchment should take place under this scheme, I sincerely hope that they will make it. There is one word with regard to that; we have not heard of it to-day, but it was much pressed in another place, and that is that the scheme was so arranged that any Government, if they desired to retrench could easily do so by cutting off a certain number of men, and thereby a great expense. There was rather a curious answer given to that indirectly last night or the night before by the Postmaster-General. There was a question of a Vote for police in South Africa. The Government admitted that the police were no longer wanted, but what did Mr. Austen Chamberlain say? He said that Lord Methuen said that the police were not any longer wanted, but that it was impossible to get rid of them because they were enlisted for a certain term, and we could not get rid of them. Would not that be the same in regard to men raised under this scheme? There is the further question of barracks, which will have to be built at an enormous expense. We must remember that the Regular forces require barracks more than the Auxiliary forces. Of course, if it is essential to have this number of men, you must have barracks in which to put them. I sincerely trust that this debate, which has not been so prolonged as at one time we expected it might be. will bear some fruit at all events, and that we may induce the members of His Majesty's Government to consider seriously this question, which is of such absolutely vital importance to the country.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: The noble Earl, during the course of his speech, reproved us gently on the ground that we who sit on this Bench had done but little to contribute to the information which was desired by the House. I think our answer to that is that it really was not until my noble friend Lord Harris rose that any question seriously calling for explanation from us was raised by any of the speakers who addressed us. We had from the noble mover a speech of the most extraordinarily discursive character, of which all I need say is that just as we imagined he was approaching the termination of a lengthy and somewhat irrelevant preamble, we found that he had come to the end of his remarks, and resumed his seat without saying a word really germane to the subject of his Motion. My Lords, as I referred to my noble friend Lord Harris, I will endeavour, although I am afraid somewhat imperfectly, to answer the two questions he put pointedly to me. He asked me whether, in the reconstituted branch of the Intelligence Department, it was likely that special attention would be paid to the important question of lines of communication in times of war. I am not able to say what special prominence will be given to that subject, but it seems to me to be perfectly obvious that it is one which the Intelligence branch will think it necessary to deal with.

*LORD HARRIS: What I intended to ask was whether there was some chance of the Intelligence branch being adequately increased to meet the needs of the Empire. I merely illustrated what I said with regard to what I think is a very weak branch, by pointing out that it was only a German officer who showed us what was wanted in that direction.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: The Intelligence branch has already been strengthened; the position of Director-General has received greater recognition, and I am confident that the Government will see to it that this most important Department is given the place it is entitled to in the hierarchy of the War Office. The noble Lord's other question related to the opportunities afforded to officers of training and learning their profession. There, again, I am able to say that the office of Director-General of Education and Training has been lately created, and I feel no doubt whatever that the matter will receive the attention it deserves. Although those points are interesting, it was not until the First Lord of the Admiralty addressed your Lordships that the attention of the House was directed to what I conceive to be the questions which deserve our consideration—the strength of the forces which the Government consider essential to the service of the Empire, and the manner in which those forces should be organised. The noble Earl opposite suggested that the number of Regular soldiers which we desire to obtain was excessive, and said he could not help thinking that the number had been fixed without sufficient consideration of the position of the Navy in our system of defence. He went on to say he understood the number had been taken with reference to our requirements for Home defence. Now, my Lords, I contradict both those statements.

*EARL SPENCER: I did not quite say that. I said the Government had not sufficiently considered the Navy in framing this scheme.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: That I altogether dispute. Our position with regard to the Navy has been correctly defined by the First Lord; we regard the Navy as our first line of defence, and we are fully alive to the fact that the position of the Army in our system must be in a sense subsidiary to that of the Navy. The noble Earl asked us whether we are able to define the policy in support of which this large number of soldiers is to be maintained. I scarcely suppose that the noble Earl, when he asked that question, expected us to explain to the House and to the public the different military contingencies, whether upon the Continent of Europe or in more remote parts of the world, which these military forces are intended to provide for. What we can say, however, is that those contingencies have of late received a great deal of attention, and that military opinion is, to the best of our belief, convinced that a smaller number than that which we have provided for would not be adequate for the great liabilities of the Empire. We have this important fact to bear in mind, that during the recent South African war we required for service beyond the sea, not three Army Corps, but the equivalent of six Army Corps; and I think he would be a bold man who would take upon himself to say that three Army Corps of Regular troops are an immoderate provision for the responsibilities which we recognise.

The noble Earl threw out to the House the suggestion that we might rely more than we did on the auxiliary forces. There is no part of my right hon. colleague's scheme that commends itself more to me than that which assigns to the auxiliary forces a position of increased prominence in our system of defence. But, my Lords, when the noble Earl tells us that we should at once content ourselves with a reduced force of Regulars, relying more than heretofore upon the auxiliary forces, I am tempted to remind him that such a change obviously requires a very great amount of increased attention to the efficiency of those auxiliary forces. My Lords, are we able to say that that standard of efficiency has already been attained by our Militia and Volunteers which would enable us to sweep away by a stroke of the pen one, or, perhaps, two, Army Corps, and to rely, in lieu of them, on the Militia and Volunteers? A part of the Regular troops are indeed maintained for the purpose of service at home in order to do what is commonly described as stiffening the auxiliary forces, and the total number of Regulars taken for that purpose, is, I believe, about 25,000. Now, is that an inordinately large number? I can recollect, it is not very long ago, when my military advisers used to protest in the strongest way against our counting any auxiliary forces for the purposes of the three Army Corps in which our military forces were then organised. In those days the utmost recognition that was accorded to the auxiliary forces was that there should be a modicum of auxiliaries introduced into a very large force of Regulars. Now it is the other way—a modicum of Regulars to stiffen a very large force of auxiliaries. That seems to me to be a sensible and prudent way of setting to work.

But there is another reason why it would be in the highest degree imprudent to weaken the total of our Regular forces at home. I refer to the weakness of the Army Reserve at this moment—a weakness that is obviously due to the extension of the service of so many of our Regulars during the war. The Army Reserve at this moment, I believe, stands at about 60,000 men. This is not nearly sufficient. I am sure the noble Earl opposite will not contradict me when I say that to my mind the strength of the Army Reserve is the very backbone of our military system. He and I remember the days when doubts and suspicions used to be cast on the Army Reserve—when we were told that the men would not be found when they were wanted, and that even if they were found they would be rusty and useless. The South African war brought with it many disappointments, but in that respect, at any rate, we were not disappointed. To my mind by far the most satisfactory incident in the history of that memorable campaign was the manner in which, at a few days' notice, 96 per cent. of the Army Reserve came forward and took their place in the home battalions. The noble Earl asked me a question with regard to the progress that has been made in the formation of the Militia Reserve. The noble Earl, like a great many military critics, is a little impatient; because the Bill forming the new Militia Reserve only passed into law in December of last year, and it is almost too soon to expect that it should as yet have produced any very imposing results.

I listened with satisfaction to one observation made by the noble Earl when he dealt with the calls which the Regular battalions at home have to meet. I think he is the first speaker who touched upon that point in the course of the debate. We require those Regular battalions at home, not only in order to use them upon occasion for service beyond the seas, but because they are the feeding units of the Regular battalions which are abroad. Here, at any rate, you have what may be described as a scientific basis for the strength which you retain at home. It may be a matter of conjecture whether you are likely to want a force of a particular size, let us say, on the Indian Frontier; but it is not a matter of conjecture when you have to take into account that you have 80 odd battalions serving in India or in colonial garrisons, and that those 80 odd battalions have to be effectually and regularly supplied with the necessary drafts. One great advantage of the approximation between the number of battalions at home and the number of battalions abroad which we have always desired to maintain is that it gives us what we believe to be infinitely the best way of supplying a steady and efficient stream of recruits to the battalions abroad. You may, if you like, say that instead of having battalions at home to feed the battalions abroad you should have depôts at home. Depôts are in certain circumstances useful enough; but, although a depôt does not require so large a number of men as a home battalion, although it is a cheaper thing, its results are beyond all question much less satisfactory. It is a much less good school for the training of recruits, and it is above all not a military unit which you can put into the field like those home battalions of which I spoke a moment ago, which when their Reserves have been added to them become such a valuable military asset in the defences of the country. Therefore I ask the House to remember that we want this considerable number of Regular soldiers at home, not only for service beyond the seas, but because they are the reservoir from which the battalions abroad are kept full and efficient.

I shall say one word only with regard to an alternative arrangement that has been recommended on high authority, and which, I think, found favour with my noble friend, Lord Harris. I mean the suggestion that we should keep a large part of these Regular troops, let us say an Army Corps, not at home, but in South Africa. The proposal is one which at first sight is a most attractive one; but I am afraid that when you come to examine it closely it presents a great many drawbacks. These battalions which you are going to keep in South Africa are, I understand, to be considered part of the Home Army, and to be kept on the home establishment. Look what would happen. A war breaks out in India, and you want to send 20,000 men from South Africa. Those battalions will be full of young soldiers. You may say that the South African ports are nearer to India than Portsmouth and Southampton. That is quite true, but those battalions will be useless for service in India unless you draw from Portsmouth and Southampton the Reservists belonging to them, and without whom they would be absolutely unfitted to take service in the field. I cannot bring myself to believe that such an arrangement might not lead to very serious confusion, and I am sure it would lead to very considerable expense. I may tell your Lordships that a preliminary examination, at any rate, has been made of a scheme of this kind with the somewhat discouraging result that we are advised that every man produced by such an arrangement would cost about £50 per head per annum more than he costs as a recruit produced under the present system.

* LORD HARRIS: Per annum or for the term of his service?

* THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: Per annum, I understand. I do not know that that calculation includes the provision of barracks, which, obviously, would have to be supplied upon a very extensive scale on the spot in South Africa. Nor do I say anything as to the effect of such a change in our system upon the popularity of recruiting. We know that a recruit will stand a certain amount of foreign service; but if you tell him when you engage him that half his service is to be spent in South Africa and half in India I am greatly afraid that many of them would turn their backs on the recruiting sergeant. I will not trouble the House except for a moment upon the question of Army Corps organisation, because my noble friend the First Lord of the Admiralty seems to me to have said all that was necessary upon that subject. I have no doubt—and I think it has become perfectly clear—that a great deal of prejudice has been created by the use of the words Army Corps. I do not know whether any other designation could be substituted. I notice that a colleague of the noble Earl's, speaking elsewhere the other day, gave his hearers a definition of an Army Corps in these words:—

> "An Army Corps," he said, "is a collocation of military units, under certain dispositions, under a certain hierarchy of military control." (Laughter.)

That may be very correct, scientifically, but it strikes me as a little cumbrous. This collocation of military units is an arrangement under which, as my noble friend very truly says, you can, if you please, detach portions of the larger military organism, and use those portions with just as much freedom as you can use them at the present time. Nor, again, is it fair to saddle this Army Corps organisation, as is sometimes done, with the whole of the additional expenditure that has grown up of late years in this country. I believe that, when you deduct the additional expenditure occasioned by increasing the number of soldiers, by increasing their pay, by increasing the reserve of stores—a most important matter—and by improving the terms offered to the auxiliary forces—when you have taken these things, and also such matters as the increased interest on loans, you will have accounted for the greater part of the increase of ten or twelve millions which has grown up during the last few years. The noble Earl asks whether he is to understand that this Army Corps organisation would admit, in years to come, of a possible reduction of the numbers which we at present propose to retain in the service. I do not want to answer that question too confidently; but it does seem to me to be perfectly reasonable to anticipate that, when the Army Reserve has grown to a proper and respectable total—and I think under the new system of three years engagement it will grow to a very much larger total than it has reached before—when that time comes it may possibly be within the power of the military authorities to employ a smaller number of men with the Colours, and to rely upon a larger number of men serving in the Reserve. But for the present, for the time with which we are concerned at this moment, it is our intention to adhere to the numbers announced to Parliament, and to the organisation which it has been proposed to give those numbers. We believe that the numbers are not excessive; we believe that the organisation is appropriate to the requirements of the country.

On Question, their Lordships divided:—Contents, 15; Non-Contents, 51.

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Carrington, E.
Spencer, E.

Gordon, V. (*E. Aberdeen.*)

Aberdare, L.
Acton, L.

Boyle, L. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
Burghclere, L.
Denman, L. [*Teller.*]

Farrer, L.
Monkswell, L.
Ribblesdale, L. [*Teller.*]
Sandhurst, L.
Stanley of Alderley, L.
Tweedmouth, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Halsbury, E. (*L. Chancellor.*)
Devonshire, D. (*L. President.*)

Ailesbury, M.
Bath, M.
Lansdowne, M.
Winchester, M.

Pembroke and Montgomery, E. (*L. Steward.*)
Clarendon, E. (*L. Chamberlain.*)
Denbigh, E.
Derby, E.
Feversham, E.
Hardwicke, E.
Northesk, E.
Onslow, E.
Roberts, E.
Selborne, E.
Shaftesbury, E.
Stanhope, E.
Strafford, E.
Vane, E. (*M. Londonderry.*)
Verulam, E.
Waldegrave, E. [*Teller.*]

Bangor, V.
Churchill, V. [*Teller.*]
Cross, V.
Goschen, V.
Knutsford, V.

Addington, L.
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Ashbourne, L.
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Belper, L.
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Braybrooke, L.
Brodrick, L. (*V. Midleton.*)
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Cottesloe, L.
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Kenyon, L.
Kilmarnock, L. (*E. Erroll.*)
Kintore, L. (*E. Kintore.*)
Lawrence, L.
Ponsonby, L. (*E. Bessborough*)
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Redesdale, L.
Shute, L. (*V. Barrington.*)
Suffield, L.
Wimborne, L.
Windsor, L.
Wolverton, L.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Nine o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 5th March, 1903.

The House met at Two of the clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz. :—

Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill.

Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz. :—

Burgess Hill and St. John's Common Gas Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill.

Stoke Newington Borough Council Bill.

Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

BETTING.

Petition from Keynsham, for Legislation; to lie upon the Table.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Heriot; Ochiltree; Inch; Maybole; Kirkcowan; and Cardross; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from St. John's Wood, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Fifty-fifth Report from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, with an Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN IRELAND (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Copy presented, of Final Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the present conditions of the higher, general, and technical education available in Ireland outside Trinity College, Dublin, with an Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LEEWARD ISLANDS.

Copy presented, of Amended Prison Rules relating to Employment of Hard Labour Male Prisoners [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

Papers laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House—

Inquiry into Charities (Administrative County of Durham), Further Return relative thereto [ordered 14th February, 1900; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to be printed. [No. 58.]

Inquiry into Charities (County of Lancaster), Further Return relative thereto [ordered 8th August, 1898; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to be printed. [No. 59.]

Inquiry into Charities (County of Wilts), Further Return relative thereto [ordered 9th August, 1901; *Mr. Griffith Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 60.]

Charitable Endowments (London), Further Return relative thereto [ordered 2nd August, 1894; *Mr. Francis Stevenson*]; to be printed. [No. 61.]

LEAD POISONING IN EARTHENWARE AND CHINA WORKS.

Address for "Return of the cases of Lead Poisoning reported as occurring in China and Earthenware Works during the years 1899 to 1902, showing (1) the number of cases in the several classes of works and in the various processes, the number of persons employed, and the proportion of cases to persons employed; (2) the number of cases occurring in each month of the year; (3) particulars as to the character of the attacks; (4) the number of persons suspended in certain districts by the Certifying Surgeons (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 61, of Session 1902)."—(*Mr. Cochrane.*)

INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES (COUNTY BOROUGH OF BARROW-IN-FURNESS).

Return ordered, "comprising (1) the Report made to the Charity Commissioners, in the result of an Inquiry held in the County Borough of Barrow-in-Furness into endowments, subject to the provisions of the Charitable Trusts Acts, 1853 to 1894, and appropriated in whole or in part for the benefit of that County Borough, or of any part thereof, together with the Report on those endowments of the Commissioners for inquiring concerning Charities, 1818 to 1837; (2) a Digest showing whether any, and, if any, what such endowments are recorded in the books of the Charity Commissioners in the County Borough; and (3) an Index, alphabetically arranged, of names and places mentioned in the Report."—(*Mr. Griffith Boscawen.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Cookery Teachers' Certificates.

MR. HENRY HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if his Department intend to continue their examinations for cookery teachers' certificates.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The Board of Education have at present no intention of discontinuing their examinations for cookery teachers' certificates.

Typhoid in the Island of Lewis—Closing of Schools.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord Advocate if he will state for what period during last year the public school at Tolsta, Island of Lewis, was closed on account of an epidemic of typhus or typhoid fever; are any schools in the Island now closed; and, if so, will he name them.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) Tolsta Public School was closed on 3rd July on account of an epidemic of typhoid fever, and was reopened on 24th December. The only school at present closed is Stornoway, Tong Public School.

Typhoid at Ross and Cromarty—Cause of Outbreak.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Lord Advocate, in view of the fact that the Report of the South-Western District Committee for Ross and Cromarty, dated 26th July last, shows that there were cases of typhoid fever and other infectious diseases in the district during the year which necessitated the closing of three public schools for periods varying from three weeks to two months, can he now state the cause of the outbreak, and what steps have been taken to prevent a recurrence of fever.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) The medical officer is unable to state the cause of the outbreak. He assures the Local Government Board that the affected houses have been cleansed and disinfected as carefully as possible.

Construction of Wall at Skigersta Pier.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Lord Advocate if he will state whether any progress has yet been made with the construction of a protecting wall for the Skigersta Pier, Island of Lewis.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) The hon. Member will recollect that I answered a similar Question on 11th December,† and on 18th December the county clerk said an offer for the execution of the work had been received, and asked that the Congested Districts Board should keep their grant open for a short time longer. The Board agreed to extend the time till 14th March, but the County Council have not yet intimated their decision to proceed with the work or not.

Telegraph Office at Rossnakill, Donegal.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in the event of the Milford Rural District Council, county Donegal, giving to the post office authorities an indemnity against loss, he will open a telegraph office at Rossnakill in this district.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) No, Sir; I regret to say that I should not be justified in doing so, as there is already a telegraph office within three-quarters of a mile which appears to meet the needs of the district.

Telegrams to Australia.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): To ask the Postmaster-General by what line or lines unrouted messages are sent from England to Australia by the Post Office here; also how similar messages destined for England are dealt with in Australia; and will he state which route is to be adopted as the *voie normale.*

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Unrouted telegrams from this country to Australia are sent by the Pacific cable. I have no information as to the disposal of such telegrams in the reverse direction. Both the Pacific cable route and those of the Eastern and Indo-European Telegraph Companies are regarded as normal routes.

Alleged Grievances of Sorter-Telegraphists at the Central Office, London.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that certain sorter-telegraphists of the Central Office, London, having passed the tests required for skilled telegraphists, have been informed that they are not required for a full eight hours' duty, and that they are employed from 10 a.m. to noon and from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. per diem, and paid 9s. per week for twenty-four hours' work; and will he explain why these men are not employed for a full day.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The hon. Member's Question no doubt relates to certain learners who are employed at wages of 9s. a week for four hours a day in performing minor duties, and for about four hours in learning. None of these learners give such an attendance as is described in the Question. They are given established appointments as vacancies admit, and, as a matter of fact, all who have passed the necessary standards have been appointed. But it should be clearly understood that the appointment of learners to the establishment must be dependent upon the occurrence of vacancies.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxvi., 899.

Farmers and the Board of Agriculture.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthenshire, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, in view of his statement that he is desirous of bringing farmers throughout the country into closer touch with the Board of Agriculture, and that he intends to take steps to accomplish this object, he will say whether he proposes doing so during the present session, and how he proposes to give effect to the scheme.

(*Answered by Mr. Hanbury.*) I hope to complete very shortly a scheme for effecting the object named in the Question. It is not one for which legislation will be necessary, as the hon. Member seems to anticipate.

Prosecutions under the Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture in how many instances since the passing of the Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act, 1893, application has been made to the Board to issue a certificate under the Act that there is reasonable ground for prosecution under Section 3 of the Act; what number of such certificates have been issued; and whether he can state the number of prosecutions and the results of such prosecutions.

(*Answered by Mr. Hanbury.*) Only one application has been made to the Board by a private purchaser for a certificate to enable proceedings to be instituted under Section 3 of the Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act, 1893, and in that case the Board were unable, on the evidence before them, to accede to the application. Several prosecutions have been instituted under Section 3 of the Act by County Councils, for which no certificate from the Board is required. We have received reports of seven such prosecutions, six of which resulted in a conviction.

Education Act—Payments of Grants.

MR. TALBOT (Oxford University): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to the rates now proposed to be made by the County Councils in respect of the Education Act of last year, and to the difficulty of obtaining the grants due to the schools until the close of the school year; and whether he will suggest means whereby the pressure upon the ratepayers which these arrangements involve can be relieved.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) I can only refer the hon. Member to the replies to Questions on this point, which I gave to the hon. Member for North Camberwell on Monday,† and to the hon. Member for the Chelmsford Division of Essex yesterday.‡ I have nothing to add to those replies.

H.M.S. "Formidable"—Prize Firing.

MR. HARMSWORTH (Caithness-shire): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that during the recent prize firing of H.M.S. "Formidable," one hit only out of twenty-eight shots fired from the twelve-inch guns was made; and whether he can state the approximate cost of each shell fired by these guns.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) As I stated in my reply to the hon. Member for Portsmouth yesterday, attention has been called to the unsatisfactory results of the prize firing in H.M.S. "Formidable," and special steps are being taken with regard to it. The cost of each practice projectile for the twelve-inch guns is approximately £7 10s.

Greenwich Old Age Pensions.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can give an assurance that the Greenwich old age pensions will continue to be paid quarterly without change of system.

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† See page 1098. ‡ See page 1360.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) I am unaware of any intention to alter the present system of paying these pensions quarterly

Godstone Rural District Council—Expenses of Litigation.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): To ask the President of the Local Government Board, can he give a statement showing the sums expended in legal expenses and disbursements by the Godstone Rural District Council in each of the last five years, with the name and nature of the matter in respect of which the expenses have been incurred; and the result of the proceedings where the matter has been the subject of litigation, arbitration, or proceedings before any Committee of either House of Parliament.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am not in possession of information which would enable me to give the particulars desired. I may, however, point out that under Section 58 (5) of the Local Government Act, 1894, it is open to any parochial elector of a parish in a rural district to inspect and take extracts from the books and accounts of the Rural District Council.

County Boundaries—Overlapping Areas.

MR. FREDERICK WILSON (Norfolk, Mid): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that for different purposes each English county is divided into an administrative county, a registration county, and an old geographical county, with overlapping areas; and whether in future arrangements he can insure that a county, instead of having three or four different areas, shall have one for all purposes.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am aware of the fact referred to in the first part of the Question. I agree that it is very desirable as far as practicable to avoid the overlapping of areas; but there are very considerable difficulties in the way of securing any such arrangement as that suggested by the hon. Member.

Audit of Transvaal Grant-in-Aid.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can inform the House whether it is still proposed, as stated in the Supplementary Estimates, to subject the expenditure out of the grant-in-aid of the Transvaal and Orange River Territory to audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

(*Answered by Mr. Hayes Fisher.*) Yes. It is entirely for the Comptroller and Auditor General to decide, having regard to the terms on which the Grant has been voted by Parliament, as to the nature and extent of the audit which he will apply.

Railway Wagons—Steel and Iron Axle Boxes.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can give the percentage of breakages of cast-iron axle boxes of railway wagons during each of the three years ending 1902, and the percentage of breakages in stamped steel axle boxes in the same period, and the proportionate weight of the stamped steel box as compared with the cast-iron box.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The particulars necessary for the supply of the information desired by the hon. Member are not in the possession of the Board of Trade.

Damage to Coast at Hallsands, South Devon.

MR. MILDMAY (Devonshire, Totnes): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the effect of the recent gales upon the cottage and foreshore at Hallsands, South Devon, consequent upon the dredging which has been permitted by the Board in connection with the Government works at Devonport; and whether the Board of Trade propose to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) My attention has not previously been drawn to this matter. I may, however, mention that the licence granted to Sir J. Jackson, Limited, to dredge in the vicinity of Hallsands was cancelled in January, 1902, and the Board were informed by the Coast Guard in May, 1902, that no materials had been dredged since that date and that the beach had made to such an extent that it was normal. I will, however, make some inquiries.

Uncertified Deaths.

MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will state the number of uncertified deaths in England and Wales during 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900, and 1901, in completion of the figures given by Sir M. W. Ridley on 24th May, 1897.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The number of deaths of which the causes were not certified are as follows: 1897, 11,103; 1898, 10,441; 1899, 10,745; 1900, 11,257; 1901, 9,986. The matter is dealt with on p. xxix of the Registrar General's Report for 1902. The figures for 1901 represent slightly under two per cent. of all registered deaths.

Commercial Treaty between United States and Cuba—Date of Ratification.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, can he state the date fixed in the Commercial Convention between the United States and Cuba for the ratification of that Convention?

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) By the terms of the Convention itself the ratifications were to be exchanged as soon as might be before the 31st of January last. On the 26th of that month, however, a protocol was signed extending the time for ratification. I am not aware what date (if any) was fixed by that instrument.

Donegal and Londonderry Boundaries—Local Government Board Inquiry.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.). To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, when, and at what place, do the Local Government Board, for Ireland propose holding the promised inquiry into the contemplated change of union boundaries in the counties of Donegal and Londonderry.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Board has not yet come to a decision in this matter. I am at present considering the propriety of having a general inquiry into the question of poor law boundaries.

Irish Education—Assistant Teachers.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Board of Education in Ireland have taken into their consideration the case of assistant teachers of high qualification and of long service with a view to having their salaries increased; and whether he will consider the advisability of placing such teachers of ten years service and second class in the second grade; and whether any estimates for this amount will be included in this year's Estimates.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Commissioners have considered the cases of assistant teachers of high qualification and long service and have dealt with such cases in Rules Nos. 195 (f) and 200 (g) of their Rules and Regulations. Provision has been made in the Estimates for the next financial year to meet any increased expenditure on assistants that may be caused by the application of these rules.

Ireland—Purchase Scheme for Labourers' Cottages.

MR. HAMMOND (Carlow, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to a resolution recently adopted by the Carlow Rural District Council to the effect that, in the absence of an approved purchase scheme for labourers' cottages and plots, the District Council should be allowed a reduction in their repayment of the loans after the given number of instalments had been paid, in the same way as tenant farmers who purchase under the Land Acts obtain a reduction after ten and fifteen years; and will he endeavour to extend to the repayment of loans by public bodies in Ireland terms similar to those which obtain under the Lands Purchase Acts.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The proposal in this Question would be a matter for consideration in the event of further legislation dealing with loans to local authorities. I cannot, at present, give an undertaking to introduce such legislation

Ireland—Treatment of Harmless Lunatics.

MR. HAMMOND: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, having regard to the restrictions placed upon Boards of Guardians in Ireland in the treatment of harmless lunatics, if he would favour the proposal for the assimilation of the law in Ireland to that in Scotland, under which it is practicable to have these persons boarded and cared for in the homes of the peasantry.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The question of making better provision for the treatment of harmless lunatics in Ireland is receiving consideration.

War Office Contracts and the Fair Wage Resolution—Case of Ross & Co., Bermondsey.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that an order for 8,000 shoe pockets has recently been given to the firm of Ross & Co., Bermondsey, which was struck off the list of contractors prior to the Lords' Inquiry into the Sweating System; whether he is aware that women are being employed on this work at about half the customary rate; and whether he will see that consideration is given in future contracts to those London firms who have always complied with the fair wages clause.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The hon. Member appears to have been misinformed. The firm mentioned was placed on the list in 1895, and is of an entirely different constitution to that struck off the list in 1888. It has been the custom to employ women largely upon this work. There has been a reduction from 3½d. to 3d. per shoe case on the piecework rate paid for stitching. This fall is ascribed to the different position of the labour market, but it cannot be said that the wages paid are less than the current rate during the execution of this contract. As regards the last part of the Question all firms employed by the War Department have to conform to the clause requiring the payment of the current wage.

Army Remounts—Purchases from Farmers.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that horses suitable for the Artillery are now on sale in North Devon; and will he say what arrangements have now been made in order that these and other horses suitable for the Army may be purchased direct from the farmers by the War Office.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The Secretary of State is aware that horses suitable for Royal Artillery are on sale in North Devon. A circular giving particulars of the classes of horses required for the Army has been forwarded to the Board of Agriculture for distribution to County Councils and others, with a view to placing farmers having horses suited to the requirements of the Army in touch with the War Office. On receipt of applications, officers will be sent to inspect and purchase the horses, if suitable.

South African War Medal.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): To ask the Secretary of State for War, will he state why troops who served in South Africa for eighteen months previous to 1902 receive no medal, while those who were serving in South Africa on 1st January 1902, with the same period of service, receive one.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) My hon. and gallant friend evidently refers to the second South African War Medal, known as the King's Medal. As I have already explained to the House, it was desired to recognise specially the services of those who remained in South Africa to the close of the war, and consequently service between the 1st January and 1st June, 1902, was held to be essential in order to secure this medal. All soldiers who served in South Africa between the 11th October, 1899, and 31st May, 1902, are eligible for the Queen's Medal.

Huts as Barracks.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the Secretary of State for War if the Government, on the grounds of health as well as economy, will take into consideration the expediency of erecting iron or wooden huts, instead of permanent costly structures, as barracks.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick*). It is held that permanent brick buildings are certainly more healthy, and in the long run more economical than iron or wooden hutments. Such buildings are utilised where they exist, but in building new barracks more permanent materials are desirable.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

A New Naval Base.

In reply to a Question by Sir J. Colomb (Great Yarmouth), of which he had given private notice,

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) said: The question of naval establishments has been engaging the attention of the Admiralty and the Government for a considerable period. Lord Goschen and the late Lords of the Admiralty, in March, 1900, appointed a Committee, which fully examined the whole question of the present and prospective accommodation for ships in His Majesty's dockyards, and as to how the harbours and other anchorages and waters at our disposal could be utilised for ships both completed and under construction. This Committee reported in January, 1902, that the growth of the Navy would shortly make it impossible for the existing ports to accommodate all the ships; and recommended the formation of another naval establishment. The Committee further stated their opinion that the most advantageous position for this establishment was in the estuary of the Forth. The Board of Admiralty, after full and careful consideration, approved this recommendation, and the Government therefore decided to establish a naval port and base on the north side of the Firth of Forth, at St. Margaret's Hope. They have for some months been in negotiation for the land, and it was the fact that these negotiations were going on that made it impossible for the Government earlier to take the House and the country into their confidence on this important matter.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the new naval base will be a mere base, or a dockyard, or a station for the repair of ships?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think perhaps the hon. Gentleman should defer that Question.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I suppose this will come on under the Naval Estimates?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes.

The Case of Colonel Kinloch.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT (Cheshire, Macclesfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what person or persons made any complaint or communication to the Commander-in-Chief, previous to the 14th December, 1902, with reference to any irregularities in the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards; on what date or dates were such complaints or communications made, what was their nature or purport, and were any of them made in writing; did the Commander-in-Chief communicate to Lieutenant-Colonel Kinloch at any time, and, if so, when, the fact that he had received such complaints or communications, and the nature or purport of them, and whether or not they affected or reflected upon the character or military reputation of Lieutenant-Colonel Kinloch in his command of the battalion. I beg further to ask on what date was Lieutenant-Colonel Kinloch first informed of the decision of the Commander-in-Chief to remove him from his command; when and where was this decision promulgated; did Lieutenant-Colonel Kinloch request from the Commander-in-Chief the favour of being permitted to put forward a statement in his defence; and, if so, on what date was that request made; what reply, if any, was made to that request; and on what date, if at all, did the Commander-in-Chief grant the requested favour.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Lord Belhaven, the father of one subaltern in the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards, and Lord de Saumarez, the relative of another subaltern, called on the Commander-in-Chief on 12th December, 1902, and made a verbal complaint that young officers in the battalion had been tried by so-called subalterns' courts-martial, not only for offences against regimental etiquette, but for military offences, and if found guilty had been punished by caning, and that their ill-treatment had been so serious that it called for interference by the authorities. Lord Roberts in reply said he would take the matter up officially, and on the following day, 13th December, he sent for the General Officer Commanding the Home District, and ordered him to investigate the circumstances fully. The Commander-in-Chief did not communicate with Colonel Kinloch, because by practice he does not communicate directly with officers commanding units. The General Officer Commanding the Home District at once assembled a regimental inquiry which sat for two days, and reported to the Adjutant-General on 15th December, forwarding the evidence taken. The character of Colonel Kinloch was not in question, but he was the first witness called at the inquiry and his responsibility, like that of all other officers called, was to be brought out by the investigation. The decision of the Commander-in-Chief was communicated to the General Officer Commanding the Home District on December 27th, 1902, and was promulgated at Aldershot, where the 1st Battalion was quartered, on January 3rd, and in London on January 15th. Colonel Kinloch, in a letter dated 29th December, asked to see the evidence taken and wished to make a statement. He was informed on January 3rd that he was at liberty to see the evidence, and that the decision arrived at in his case was formed on his own statement and on the results of the exercise of his command—Colonel Kinloch having urged that his personal honour was affected by certain expressions in the Adjutant-General's letter of 27th December, the Commander-in-Chief gave him an interview on 12th January, at which he accepted Colonel Kinloch's statement that he was unaware of the punishments inflicted by the so-called subalterns' courts-martial and the treatment of these young officers. I may add that Colonel Kinloch is an officer who, apart from recent occurrences, had served with credit at home and distinction on active service, but the Commander-in-Chief holds that the state of Colonel Kinloch's battalion and the facts disclosed by the own evidence showed defects in the administration of his command which made it impossible to retain him. He was consequently placed on half-pay. Another Guards officer of distinction has been placed in command of the battalion, and the House may rest assured that the irregularities brought to light will be absolutely checked in this or in any other regiment.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the letter of the 27th December, to which he refers, states that Colonel Kinloch was aware of the practices which were complained of, and gave that as a reason for his removal?

*MR. BRODRICK: No, Sir. The statement in the letter was to the effect that he was aware, or that it was assumed he was aware, of the existence of these courts-martial, but it was not stated that he was aware of the system of punishment that was adopted.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Will the hon. Gentleman say what was the condition of Colonel Kinloch's battalion when taken over by Colonel Lloyd?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the Question.

Militia and Volunteer Officers.

*MR. MORRELL (Oxfordshire, Woodstock): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether his attention has been directed to the deficiency in the number of officers holding commissions in the Militia and Volunteers, as notified by comparing this number with that set out for the establishment; whether he is aware of any causes for this deficiency; —also whether, with a view to increasing the number of applicants for commissions, he will consider the advisability of taking steps to reduce the expenses to which officers are subjected in maintaining their companies.

*MR. BRODRICK: Yes, Sir. The deficiency of officers in the Militia and Volunteers has long been a subject of serious concern. In 1889 the Militia were 251 officers short; establishment, 3,575. In 1895 deficiency had increased to 530 officers short; establishment, 3,515. In 1898 deficiency had increased to 728 officers short; establishment, 3,446. In 1903 deficiency had increased to 743 officers short; establishment, 3,400. Thus there is a constantly increasing deficiency, with a decreased establishment. In the Volunteers there has always been a large shortage of officers, but this has rapidly increased with the increase of establishment. In 1886, 1,226 wanting; establishment, 7483. In 1896, 1,654 wanting; establishment, 7,749. In February, 1902, 1,989 wanting; establishment, 9,379. In February, 1903, 2,147 wanting; establishment, 9,409. From 1896 to 1898 there was an improvement in the numbers of Volunteer officers, possibly due to the grant of an allowance for uniform by the War Office; but it will be seen that the shortage in the Militia, which is nearly 22 per cent., and in the Volunteers 23 per cent., must seriously militate against the efficiency of both forces. The deficiency of Volunteer Officers is of long standing, and has steadily increased with the increases of establishment. If the Army Order issued at the close of 1901, imposing greater demands on the Volunteers, has caused a diminution, it can only be up to now to the extent of about 1½ per cent. I cannot doubt that the pecuniary liability which falls on Volunteer officers in some regiments is an important factor in a result which greatly impairs the value of our auxiliary forces; and in view of this and other circumstances involving the future of both these forces, the Government have advised the King to issue a Royal Commission to enquire into the pay, terms of service, and efficiency of the Militia and Volunteer Forces, and to report whether any, and what, modification is necessary in existing conditions.

Strength of the Army.

*SIR J. DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the statement that the Army, inclusive of India, now stands at 271,800, and is, on that basis, 12,000 over strength, is in accordance with the figures of the Estimates of this year, seeing that the number of men on the establishment of the Army for the current year is 210,000 exclusive, and 284,378 inclusive, of the Indian Army.

MR. BRODRICK: Yes, Sir. The statement is in accordance with the figures shown in the Estimates. The latter figures include Officers, Warrant Officers and the whole of the Colonial Corps and Indian troops in the colonies which are paid for out of Imperial funds; the figures in my statement exclude these items.

MR. BECKETT (Yorkshire, N.R., Whitby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the approaching discussion on the Army Estimates, he will issue a detailed statement as to the actual effective strength of the Army now serving in this country.

COLONEL WELBY (Taunton): May I also ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state from Regimental Return B. 104, rendered monthly to the War Office, the numbers on 28th February of effective Regular troops in the units of the first three Army Corps furnishing that Return; and say how many of the 12,000 surplus men belong to those units.

MR. BRODRICK: In replying to a similar Question put by my hon. friend the Member for Oldham on Tuesday last,* I fully explained my reasons for not attempting to give any detailed figures of effective strength at present owing to the numerous moves and drafting now taking place, but I am prepared to grant a return as soon as these moves have ceased and an accurate return can be made.

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* See page 1227.

MR. BECKETT: But is it not possible to ascertain the effective strength serving in this country at the present moment? Cannot the right hon. Gentleman telegraph to the various commanders of Army Corps and ascertain from them the number of men who are in receipt of pay at this moment?

MR. BRODRICK: Of course, it is always possible to telegraph for information, but information so obtained would not be the most accurate.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): Why?

MR. BRODRICK: Because it would not include the troops on passage or those leaving units to go abroad. It would give a totally inadequate idea of the force in the United Kingdom at the present moment. There are about 18,000 men at this moment on gratuity furlough.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: Would not the information be as accurate as that given by the right hon. Gentleman the other night?

MR. BRODRICK: I gave the Honse the other night the total strength of the Army at home and abroad, including those who are on passage.

New Army Rifle.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War will he direct that before the proposed new rifle is finally adopted the effect of shortening the barrel in increasing the recoil shall be further tested in order to ascertain the influence of this greater recoil on accuracy of shooting when the weapon is used by the rank and file of the Army; and can he say whether it is proposed to recommend the proposed new rifle for use in the Navy; and, if so, whether the Board of Admiralty will have any voice in the matter.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The new pattern of rifle has been finally adopted for land service. As my hon. friend has been already told, the question of the recoil was fully considered. A number of these rifles have been under trial by the Navy, and it rests with the Admiralty to decide whether they will adopt the new rifle for the Navy.

In reply to further questions, Lord Stanley said the new pattern rifle was adopted after many trials. He saw no objection to placing one of them in the Tea Room for hon. Members to see.

Cost of Soldiers.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in the answer given to the hon. Member for Exeter on 7th November,† stating the average annual cost of a private of each branch of the service, the calculation was made on the actual cost of the individual private, or whether the statement covered the cost of regimental officers and staff in the several corps, as well as of women borne on the strength; and, further, to ask the average annual cost of a private of the Royal Garrison Regiment, including the married establishment.

LORD STANLEY: In reply to the first part of the Question, as regards the Regular forces, the calculation was based on the actual cost of the individual private; in the case of the Militia, Yeomanry and Volunteers it included the cost of the staff. The average annual cost of a private of the Garrison Regiment including the married establishment, but excluding the regimental officers and staff, may be taken at £69 16s. 9d.

Officers' Uniforms—Selection of Contractors.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to a circular issued by the War Office to commanding officers of regiments in the United Kingdom, in which certain private firms are recommended to officers with which to place their orders for their uniforms and other necessaries of outfit; whether he is aware that a regimental order has also been issued to subordinate officers to a similar effect; and will he say whether these firms have been selected after being invited to tender; and, if so, were the tenders open to competition.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxiv., 386.

LORD STANLEY: The hon. Member has been misinformed; no such circular has been issued. A circular has been issued by the War Office direct to a large number of firms of tailors asking for their terms for supplying officers on joining with uniforms, if cash payments were made.

MR. NANNETTI: If I supply the noble Lord with a copy of the circular issued, in which London firms are specifically named, will he make further inquiries? Have not orders to certain tailors in Dublin been cancelled in consequence of the circular?

LORD STANLEY: There is no need for further inquiry. The object of issuing the circular was to get information which would enable us to carry out the policy of cheapening the cost of uniforms to officers.

MR. NANNETTI: Then has the War Office issued instructions to commanding officers to act as canvassers for private firms?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Is it not the fact that Irish firms have been excluded from the list?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is a totally different question.

MR. NANNETTI: I will call attention to this on another occasion.

H.M. "Enchantress."

SIR WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, what firms tendered for His Majesty's new yacht "Enchantress"; what were the figures of the tenders respectively; what type of boilers are being fitted into her; and whether she is of single or twin-screw design.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The following firms tendered for the new Admiralty Yacht: Messrs. Harland & Wolff, Belfast; Messrs. Henderson & Co., Glasgow; Messrs. Inglis, Glasgow; Messrs. Ramage & Ferguson, Leith. It would be contrary to established practice to give the amounts of the various tenders; in this case the lowest tender was accepted. The boilers to be fitted are of cylindrical type, single ended, and the vessel is of twin-screw design.

SIR WILLIAM ALLAN: Why is it that the Admiralty have decided to put Scotch boilers into this vessel and not into others.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Battleship Construction.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the time, from the laying down until commissioning, now usually taken in the construction of battleships; what is the date of the commission of the "Russell," of the programme of July 1898, laid down in 1899, and launched in February 1901; and of the "Albemarle," of the programme announced in the financial year ended March 1899, laid down in January 1900, and launched in March 1901; whether the trials of the latter ship were only begun in January 1903; and what progress has been made in expediting the construction of ships.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The average time estimated for the completion of the "Albemarle," "Montagu," "Queen," "Prince of Wales," "King Edward VII." and "New Zealand" is three years two months. The "Russell" was commissioned on the 19th February. The "Albemarle" has not yet been commissioned, and her trials, as stated, were begun in January. The rate of construction of ships is being accelerated, and it is hoped, moreover, that the practice which is now being adopted of allowing vessels to be completed in the contract yards will tend to greater rapidity.

Dockyard Establishments.

GENERAL LAURIE: To ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether he is now in a position to state what decision has been arrived at as to an increase in the numbers of the established workmen in the Royal Dockyards.

MR. PRETYMAN (Suffolk, Woodbridge): The matter is still under the consideration of the Board of Admiralty, but an early decision is expected.

Basutoland.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, seeing that the last Report on Basutoland shows a sum of £75,380 to the credit of the Administration, will he state when the proposed increase in the Education Grants will be made.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E., for Mr. J. Chamberlain): The question of the best means of applying the surplus for the benefit of the Basutos and the development of the country is engaging the earnest attention of Lord Milner. In the meantime, increased provision for educational expenditure has been made in the Estimates for the current financial year.

Archbishopric of Cyprus.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether His Majesty's Government will communicate to the House copies of the correspondence which has passed between the Colonial Office and the High Commissioner of Cyprus and the Patriarch of Constantinople regarding the refusal of the High Commissioner of Cyprus to issue the necessary orders for the admission of the Archbishop-elect of Cyprus to the temporalities of the Metropolitan See; and, if no Papers are forthcoming, whether the Secretary of State will communicate the reasons for keeping vacant for three years the highest spiritual appointment in the island, and neglecting to provide for the regular administration of the revenues of the Archbishopric and for the ecclesiastical needs of the see.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Member was informed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in reply to his Question of 29th October last,† that no Archbishop of Cyprus had yet been elected. As there is no Archbishop-elect the question of admission to the temporalities of the see has not arisen. The delay in filling the vacancy is not due to the Government, but to a dispute in the Church. The administration of the revenues and the ecclesiastical needs of the see are in the meantime provided for, in accordance with the custom of the Church, by the Holy Synod. A settlement of the dispute would not be hastened by the publication of correspondence, which it is not desirable to produce until an agreement has been arrived at between the contending parties in the Church.

Coolie Labour in British Guiana.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Postmaster General, as representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies, does the Crown Colony of British Guiana contribute one-third of the expense of immigration into that colony of Indian coolies for work on sugar plantations, and does His Majesty's Government guarantee to the Indian Government the payment of wages to, and of return passages to India for, such coolies; do such contributions or guarantees constitute a direct or indirect bounty on the production or exportation of sugar; and have His Majesty's Government received any communications on the subject from the authorities of the colony.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: At present the Government of British Guiana contribute one-third of the expense of coolie immigration into the colony. No such guarantee as that suggested has been given by His Majesty's Government. In answer to the third part of the Question it is not usual to make an official statement as to the interpretation of a particular clause of a Convention until circumstances have arisen which require such a statement. In answer to the fourth part, the incidence of the cost of immigration is the subject of correspondence now proceeding with the Governor.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxiii., 1068.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Did not the Colonial Office give a guarantee?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Colonial Office is part of the Government, and I understand that no guarantee has been given on behalf of the Government.

Telegraphic Communication with Iceland.

*MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in view of the proposals contained in the Report of the International Conference on Scientific Investigations in the North Sea, will effect be given to the proposal to connect the Faroe Islands and Iceland by telegraph with the rest of Europe; and, if so, will he state at whose cost the work will be undertaken.

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): The Great Northern Telegraph Company have applied for a licence for a cable to be laid from the Shetland Islands, *viâ* the Faroe Islands, to Iceland, and a favourable reply has been given to this application. The company have stated, however, that the establishment of the proposed cable is dependent upon sufficient financial support being obtained.

Aliens and Police Protection.

MR. ERNEST FLOWER (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been directed to the fact that in Metropolitan districts, such as Soho and Whitechapel, where there is a large foreign population, a proportionately larger police force is maintained than in districts where there are few or no foreigners; and, if so, whether he has any official reports showing that the larger police force is due to the presence of a large criminal element in the foreign population.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): No, Sir. It is not the case that in Metropolitan districts where there is a large foreign population the police force is proportionately larger than elsewhere. The foreign population in the C, D, and H Divisions, which include Whitechapel and Soho, has increased considerably of late years, but it has not been found necessary to augment these Divisions on that account.

Imports of Poultry.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether arrangements can be made for the value of poultry imported to be indicated as distinct from game in the Accounts relating to the Trade and Navigation of the United Kingdom.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The form and scope of the Accounts to be issued during 1903 has for some time been definitely fixed and it is now too late for any alteration to be made. The question will be referred to the Departmental Committee for the revision of the accounts at its next annual meeting, which will be held in the Autumn of this year.

Railway Companies and Street Sub-Soil.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to five railway Private Bills which have been introduced to this House, containing provisions authorising the respective railway companies to enter upon, take, and use the sub-soil and under-surface of any street for the purposes of their railways without making any payment or compensation to the owners of the soil so taken; and whether the Government propose to take any steps in the matter.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: My attention has been directed to this subject. The point is not a new one and has received the consideration of Committees on Private Bills as well as of two Joint Committees of both Houses. I would refer the hon. Member to the Reports of those Committees dated 1892 and 1901 respectively. The recommendations made therein have, I believe, been followed by the Private Bill Committees which have dealt with particular schemes. I express no opinion on the legal point as to whether owners of adjoining house property are entitled to compensation for sub-soil taken from the streets in front of their property, but I understand that it is contended on authority that no such right exists. Committees have, on the other hand, given owners of property special clauses providing for their protection in case of damage to property. The matter is, I think, one for Committees to deal with, and does not call for the intervention of the Government.

Undesirable Immigrants.

MR. ERNEST FLOWER: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the fact that immigrants rejected as undesirables by our own colonies are being landed from time to time in England; and whether he has any means of ascertaining, if any, and, if so, how many, of the persons so landed remain in this country.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am aware that a certain number of immigrants rejected by our own colonies under their Immigration Laws are landed on their return journey in the United Kingdom. I have no official information as to whether any of such persons remain in this country, but presumably such of them as are natives of the United Kingdom remain here. Last year out of eighty-six persons rejected by the Canadian Authorities and landed in this country two were British, and I am informed by the Shipping Companies that the whole of the eighty-four foreigners were conveyed to their homes, none remaining in the United Kingdom. We have only records of two persons rejected by the Natal Authorities in 1902 and landed in this country, both of whom were British subjects.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): From what country did these foreigners come?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot say, but they were all sent back.

Hours of Railway Men—Return.

MR. BELL (Derby): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has called for a return of the hours worked by railwaymen for December last; whether he is aware that several railway companies after his warning issued private instructions to their officials to the effect that men should not be allowed to work more than twelve hours per day during the month of December, and that since that date such instructions have been cancelled and otherwise relaxed; and will he call for a return of the hours worked for October or November, or any month which he may not have advised them of previously.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: A return for December last has been called for and we have already received the returns of a considerable number of companies. I have no official information of the instruction said to be issued by various railway companies last year, with the object of keeping down the hours worked by their servants, nor have I any knowledge of their alleged subsequent cancellation.

MR. BELL: If I supply the right hon. Gentleman with copies of the circular, and he is satisfied that that course has been adopted by the railway company, will he order a return for some other month than December?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: If the hon. Member supplies me with the circular I will, of course, consider the matter.

Brakes on Goods Trains.

MR. BELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is doing anything, and, if so, what, to press forward the question of either-side brakes on goods and mineral wagons on railways; and whether he will bring pressure to bear upon the companies through the Railway and Canal Commissioners, or otherwise, to get the rule to effect their introduction brought into operation as speedily as possible.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: A rule on this subject has been prepared and advertised under the provisions of the Railway Employment (Prevention of Accidents) Act, 1900. Objectors have been heard by the Board of Trade, and the question as to the form in which the rule should be again issued is under consideration. It is not probable that material modifications, if any, will be made by the Board in such re-issue, and I am afraid the Railway Companies will again appeal to the Railway and Canal Commissioners. The Board of Trade will expedite matters as far as they can consistently with the formal procedure laid down by the Statute.

Overtime in the Post Office.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the authorities of the Post Office are now giving effect to the recommendation of the Tweedmouth Committee, that if, in any period of forty-eight hours, the combined amount of a long and short duty exceeded sixteen hours, the amount of such excess should be paid for as overtime without reference to the number of hours worked on other days of the same week.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The recommendation of the Committee was not that the excess should be "paid for" as overtime, but that it should be "treated as overtime, that is, that each hour should be counted as an hour and a quarter"; and I have reason to believe that the Committee purposely used this phraseology in order to negative the interpretation suggested in the hon. Member's Question.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Lord Tweedmouth differs from that view of the recommendation?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have seen a letter purporting to come from Lord Tweedmouth. I do not wish to involve myself in any controversy with him, but I think he must have forgotten what passed.

Protection against Fire.

MR. PYM (Bedford): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, having regard to the loss of life and property caused by the increasing number of fires that have taken place in London and the country, he will endeavour to introduce some legislation upon the lines of the Fire Brigade Report issued in 1901.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): Looking to the legislation which is already contemplated, I could not promise to introduce a Bill dealing with this matter during the present Session.

Kensington Palace—Sale of Building Plots.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the seven plots of land fronting Kensington Palace, advertised to be let for building purposes, are included in the Schedule to the Act 5 Victoria, cap. 1, dealing with the twenty-eight acres of ground used for kitchen garden and other purposes at Kensington Palace; and can he say how many applicants have there been for the several plots, and for what term of years and at what rent have leases been granted.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HAYES FISHER, Fulham): Yes, Sir; the seven plots referred to form part of the twenty-eight acres described in the Schedule to the Act 5 Victoria, cap. 1. Two tenders have been received for the whole of the seven plots, and one for part only, but as no tender has yet been actually accepted it is impossible for me to furnish the information desired as to rent, etc.

DR. FARQUHARSON: Is the scheme completed? Is it necessary to cut down the fine row of trees fringing these plots?

MR. HAYES FISHER: I have no information as to that.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Is it too late to reconsider the question of letting the land go?

MR. HAYES FISHER: No, but I cannot promise that any other policy will be adopted. I will make inquiries.

London and Globe Finance Corporation.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether any minute or memorandum has been preserved of the reasons on which he grounded his decision not to set the Public Prosecutor in motion in the case of the London and Globe Finance Corporation; and, if so, whether he would lay that minute on the Table.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): No minutes are kept. The only documents are the instructions on which the consultation proceeded, and it would not be in accordance with usage to lay the Papers on the Table of the House.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will the hon. and learned Gentleman see that his own memorandum is preserved for the benefit of future generations?

Sunderland and Durham County Institution for the Blind.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): On behalf of the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil I beg to ask the hon. Member for the Tunbridge Division, as representing the Charity Commissioners, whether he is aware that the blind ship-fender makers of the Sunderland and Durham County Institution for the Blind have been locked out since October last for refusing to accept a reduction of 27 per cent. in their wages, which only averaged 12s. per week last year; whether the governors are threatening to permanently close this department; and, seeing that a representation on behalf of the men has been made to the Charity Commissioners, will he state what action they propose taking in the matter.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): The Commissioners have been informed that no part of the income of the Institution is derived from endowments. In these circumstances they would have no jurisdiction in the matter, and a reply to that effect to the representation which has been made to them has been forwarded accordingly.

Applecross (Ross-shire) Medical Officer.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Lord Advocate, in view of the fact that applications are invited for the appointment of medical officer and vaccinator for the Applecross district of the parish of Applecross, Ross-shire, will care be taken that the medical officer appointed possesses the public health diploma required under the Public Health Act, 1897.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): No such diploma is required by law for the appointment in question, which has already been made.

Ballinamore and Ballyconnell Canal.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resolution of the Roscommon County Council complaining of the treatment of a portion of the County Roscommon by the levying of the charge for maintenance of the Ballinamore and Ballyconnell Canal, and asking for relief; and whether the Irish Government will bring in a short amending Act to remove the treatment complained of.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The resolution was received on Saturday last, and is at present the subject of inquiry.

Lismore Union Master's Examination.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state in what subject or subjects the examination of Mr. George M'Donald, who was recently elected master of Lismore Union, took place; what official prepared the questions which were set to Mr. M'Donald by Mr. R. Kelly, Local Government Board Inspector; what subjects Mr. M'Donald is alleged to have failed to answer satisfactorily; and whether he will furnish a copy of the letter or letters received by the Local Government Board prior to this examination of Mr. M'Donald asking them not to sanction his appointment.

MR. WYNDHAM: Elementary arithmetic and English composition. The questions were prepared by the Inspector. Mr. M'Donald failed to pass in either subject. No communication was received by the Board of the nature mentioned in the last part of the Question.

Union Masters' Examinations.

Mr. O'SHEE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how many masters of unions in Ireland have been elected and sanctioned since 1st January, 1899, and for what unions; how many of them underwent an examination in reading, writing from dictation, and arithmetic; who conducted such examinations; and how many of them underwent no examination but were sanctioned by the Local Government Board after a short period of probation.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The appointments of sixty-nine workhouse masters have been sanctioned since the date mentioned. The further information desired in the Question has been called for and will be communicated to the hon. Member when received.

Roxboro Road School, Limerick.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can explain why after thirty-three years, during which time the Roxboro Road Schools at Limerick have been in the hands of the Commissioners of Education in Ireland, only £212 cash and £63 stock have accumulated out of rent; will he say whether any auditor has certified that these sums represent the amount which ought to have accumulated; whether these premises were occupied between the years 1873 and 1880: and, if so, by whom, under what tenure, and at what rent.

Mr. WYNDHAM: On the 29th March, 1901,† I informed the hon. Member that out of the moneys accumulating in the hands of the Commissioners a sum of £188 had been expended by them on repairs to the schools between the years 1880 and 1890. Since 1891 no similar expenditure has been incurred. The accounts of the Commissioners are audited annually by an officer of the Local Government Board, who certifies as to their correctness. The facts representing the occupation of the premises prior to 1880 are fully stated in the various schemes prepared and published by the Commissioners. I would refer the hon. Member to Parliamentary Paper No. 69 of 1897.

Galway Technical Instruction Committee.

Mr. REDDY (King's Co., Birr): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Galway I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to a resolution of the Tuam Technical Instruction Committee in December last, requesting the County Galway Technical Instruction Committee to allow a sum of £10 a year for rent of a house for technical instruction at Monivea, County Galway; and whether, seeing that this sum was voted by the County Technical Instruction Committee on the 11th December, 1902, will the Department of Technical Instruction raise any objection to the County Committee paying over the sum of £10 to the Local Committee.

Mr. WYNDHAM: No report has yet been received. I have written to the hon. Member asking him to postpone the Question for a day or two.

River Barrow Floods.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's Co., Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution, passed unanimously by the Mountmellick Town Commissioners on the 3rd ultimo, calling attention to the devastation, loss of property, and risk to life caused by the floods from the River Barrow, which are becoming more frequent and extensive year by year; and will he say what steps he proposes taking to remedy this evil.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The resolution was received. The question of arterial drainage is a large one. It has not been lost sight of by the Government, but in the present condition of Irish legislative business, I am unable to make any statement in the direction suggested.

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† See (4) *Debates*, xcii., 226.

Kildare Clerk of the Peace.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Clerk of the Crown and Peace for the County Kildare is agent for several landlords; and whether it is in accordance with practice that a public official should occupy such a position, the duties of which lead to his being a party to legal proceedings in a court of which he is an official.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am informed that this officer acts as agent for one landlord only. The propriety of this arrangement is under consideration. Perhaps the hon. Member will repeat the Question on Monday.

South Donegal Fisheries.

*MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has considered the claims brought under his notice of Glencolombkill, Kilcar, St. John's Point, Ardara, and Bundoran. for the erection of boat slips and the extension and improvement of piers for the benefit of the fishing industry of the seaboard of South Donegal, and the preservation of the lives of the fishermen; whether, having regard to the fact that the £100,000 which is to be expended under the provisions of the Marine Works (Ireland) Act is not in any part to be expended on such works as the erection of boat slips and storm works, South Donegal, for whose seaboard these works are asked, is to be excluded from the benefits of the Act; and what steps, if any, does the Government contemplate for the construction on that seaboard of boat slips and the improvement of the piers and harbours.

MR. WYNDHAM: The claims of all undertakings of this description, to which the provisions of the Act apply, were considered at the recent Conference. The Congested Districts Board has recently improved the landing-place at Glencolombkill, and is arranging for the construction of an approach road to that work. There are two boat slips at St. John's Point. The Board has offered to contribute £150 for a slip at Ardara, provided the work be undertaken by the local authorities. The requirements of Kilcar appear to be provided for by existing slips in the neighbourhood. With respect to Bundoran the construction of any work of utility there is, I fear, at present impracticable, as its cost would be in excess of any sum which the Government could allocate for the purpose.

Irish National School Teachers.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the National Board have recommended the reduction of the average required for assistant teachers in Irish national schools to fifty; and, if so, whether provision will be made in the coming Estimates for carrying this reform into operation.

MR WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir; such a proposal was made. It would involve an additional charge of £24,000 per annum on the Estimate for Public Education. Additions of so large a character should, in the opinion of the Irish Government, be considered in relation to all other demands that may be made in respect of education in Ireland.

In reply to a further Question Mr. WYNDHAM said he hoped to make a statement shortly with regard to the equivalent grant for Ireland.

Pay of Irish Rural Postmen.

MR. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that a rural postman named Michael Ganby, at Whitehall, Tarnonbarry, Ireland, is receiving a wage of only 5s. 6d. per week: and will he state the number of English miles comprising this postman's round, whether it is a six or a seven days delivery, and whether it is according to the authorised scale in Ireland.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I understand the hon. Member to refer to Michael Ganby, who is employed on the Cloonmore delivery, Whitehall, Longford, and that this is the case to which he referred on a recent occasion when he said that he knew the case of a postal letter-carrier in Ireland who had to walk twenty miles a day, seven days a week, for which he received a salary of 5s. a week. The facts are that Ganby is employed for six days a week. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays the length of his walk is 7½ miles; on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays it is 6¾ miles. On the three former days his postal work occupies two hours and twenty-five minutes; on the three latter it occupies two hours and twenty minutes. The rest of his time is at his own disposal. He is, I understand, a small farmer. For his postal work he receives 5s. 6d. a week, which is in accordance with the authorised scale.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman recommend this man for outdoor relief?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No, he is a farmer and does not need it.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL; Give him a company directorship.

Castletown (Queen's Co.) Postmastership.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the vacancy in the postmastership of Castletown, Queen's County, has been filled up; and, if so, will he say who has been appointed.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The vacancy at Castletown, Queen's County, has been filled by the appointment of Mrs. Ellen Mary Quinn, who was installed on the 16th of January last.

Law Officers' Opinions.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will consider the propriety of assimilating the practice in England to the practice in the United States of America, where the opinions of the Attorney General, as legal adviser to the Executive, are published officially.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I see no reason for varying the long and well-established practice which obtains in this country in this matter.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: But having regard to the fact that the American Attorney General gets a salary twenty times less than the English Attorney General——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I wish to ask the hon. Gentleman as to the business to be taken next week.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: We begin the Army Estimates on Monday and continue them *de die in diem.* I understand that they will be at the Vote Office this afternoon.

SELECTION STANDING COMMITTEES.

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure the following fifteen Members in respect of the County Courts Jurisdiction Extension Bill:—Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Causton, Sir Henry Fowler, Mr. Garfit, Mr. Corrie Grant, Mr. Hatch, Mr. Kimber, Mr. Levy, Mr. Samuel Roberts, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Strutt, Mr. Tollemache, Mr. Tomkinson, and Mr. Eugene Wason.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

*MR. WILLIAM JONES, Member for North Carnarvonshire, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "the severe privation and loss arising from the struggle in the Penrhyn quarry district; the recent grave recommendations of the Carnarvonshire Standing Joint Committee in reporting thereon, and the failure to put into operation the provisions of the Conciliation Act to terminate the dispute;" and, the pleasure of the House having been signified, the Motion stood over, under Standing Order No. 10, until the Evening Sitting, this day.

NEW BILLS.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE (No. 2) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Church Discipline," presented by Mr. Cripps; supported by Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. Vicary Gibbs, Mr. Laurence Hardy, Mr. Lyttelton, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Duke, Mr. Wharton, Sir John Dorington, Sir Francis Powell, and Mr. Griffith Boscawen; to be read a second time upon Friday, 13th March, and to be printed. [Bill 78.]

VACCINATION BILL.

"To amend the Vaccination Acts," presented by Mr. Broadhurst; supported by Mr. Thomas Bayley, Sir John Rolleston, Mr. Channing, and Mr. Corrie Grant; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 79.]

TIED HOUSES (ABOLITION) BILL.

"To abolish Tied Houses," presented by Mr. Broadhurst; supported by Sir John Brunner, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Levy, Mr. Thomas Bayley, and Mr. Herbert Lewis; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 80.]

HOUSING OF WORKING CLASSES (REPAYMENT OF LOANS) BILL.

"To extend the period for the repayment of Loans relating to the Housing of the Working Classes, and for other purposes connected therewith," presented by Mr. Claude Hay; supported by Sir J. Dickson Poynder, Sir John Gorst, Mr. Peel, Major Evans-Gordon, and Mr. Goulding; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 81.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend The Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894," presented by Mr. Cathcart Wason; supported by Sir Andrew Agnew, Sir William Arrol, Mr. Alexander Cross, Colonel Denny, Mr. James Reid, Mr. John Dewar, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Harmsworth, Mr. Eugene Wason, and Mr. Weir; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 82.]

BOROUGH FUNDS BILL.

"To amend The Borough Funds Act, 1872," presented by Mr. Walter Long; supported by Mr. Grant Lawson; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 83.]

LAND TENURE BILL.

"To amend the law relating to the Tenure of Land," presented by Mr. Lambert; supported by Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Soares, Mr. Allen, Mr. Mansfield, and Mr. Herbert Samuel; to be read a second time upon Friday, 13th March, and to be printed. [Bill 84.]

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Public Houses (Hours of Closing) (Scotland) Act, 1887," presented by Sir John Stirling-Maxwell; supported by Sir William Dunn, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Bryce, Sir John Leng, Mr. Shaw-Stewart, and Mr. Hunter Craig; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 85.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).

Ordered, "That this day the Motion on the Paper relating to the appointment of the Committee of Defence have precedence of the Committee of Supply."—(*Mr Balfour.*)

THE COMMITTEE OF DEFENCE.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I rejoice that the exigencies of public business have given the House the chance of discussing a subject which, I know, has excited very widespread interest among all Gentlemen concerned in Imperial defence on both sides of the House; and, while I am glad that the House should have an opportunity of expressing its views on the subject, I am glad also from my own point of view that I am able to supplement the very brief statement which I made at a public meeting about three weeks ago—a statement necessarily incomplete, but which, incomplete as it was, is the only statement which, I think, has as yet been made to the public on this subject. As the House is aware, there has been for many years in existence a Defence Committee of the Cabinet, and I may perhaps commence my observations by explaining in what respects the present Defence Committee differs from that which it has replaced. In the first place, it differs from it as regards the subjects with which it deals. The general practice of the old Defence Committee was to take up the points referred to it from time to time by the Cabinet. There might be a question, perhaps, between the War Office or the Admiralty and the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon which some discussion outside those two Departments was desirable, or it might be that some question of Imperial defence which had risen for the moment above the horizon had attracted the attention of the Cabinet and was referred by it to the Defence Committee. In that capacity the old Defence Committee did, I think, extremely good work, and was a great improvement upon the state of things which existed before it was called into being. But the new Defence Committee is much more ambitious—at all events, at this early stage I have no right to use any other word—in its scope. The idea the Government had in establishing it is not to take up from time to time questions referred to it by the Cabinet, but to make it its duty to survey as a whole the strategical military needs of the Empire, to deal with the complicated questions which are all essential elements in that general problem, and to revise from time to time their own previous decisions, so that the Cabinet shall always be informed and always have at its disposal information upon these important points. They should not be left to the crisis of the moment, but when there is no special stress or strain the Government and its advisers should devote themselves to the consideration of these broad and all-important issues.

So much for the change of subject, scope, and design between the new Defence Committee and the old. It only remains for me to describe in what the constitution of the new Committee differs from the constitution of the old one. The old Defence Committee was, in the strictest and narrowest sense of the word, a Committee of the Cabinet; and like all ordinary Committees of the Cabinet, it kept no record, and it admitted to its council no outsiders. Of course, that does not mean that the old Defence Committee did not ask the opinion of naval and military experts which the Government had at their disposal. It only means that those experts came to the Committee, not as members, but as witnesses. They came, they were asked questions, they were cross-examined, and they gave their opinions, and those opinions were considered by the Cabinet Committee, and the Cabinet Committee formed its judgment, like other Cabinet Committees, and conveyed that to the Cabinet as a whole. There are obvious disadvantages in that course. In the first place, it is of the essence both of Cabinets and Cabinet Committees, in the narrower sense of the word, that they keep no records. There are great objections to that procedure when you are dealing with the particular class of subject with which the Defence Committee is entrusted. In the first place, even during the continuance of a single Administration, it may well happen that the conditions of the problem change, and that they have to be reconsidered by the Defence Committee, and by the Cabinet which it advises; and it is an enormous additional labour that the whole matter has to be gone into again, and taken up in the midst of its responsible and multifarious duties by the Cabinet. The members themselves, or some of them, may well have got rusty in the details of the problem on which they made up their minds before, and only remember the outline of their decision. If this new plan bears all the fruit which I hope it will bear the conclusions of the Defence Committee will be embodied not merely in resolutions, but in reasoned documents in which the whole ground upon which those conclusions have been arrived at will be set out for the information, in the first place, of the Cabinet of the time; and in the second place of the same Administration at a later period, for revision if need be; and last, if not least, for the information of their successors in office.

There are a great many things in which there is discontinuity between successive Administrations in this House, chosen, as they commonly are, upon different sides of the House. But there is one point on which there ought to be no discontinuity, and that is the military and naval policy of the Empire. There may be differences of opinion. There have been, indeed, in my own experience, most important differences of opinion, not between the members of that Bench and members of this Bench, but between the First Naval Lord at one time and the First Naval Lord at another time, between two successive Boards of Admiralty, two successive Commanders-in-Chief, two successive sets of experts belonging to either Department. It is most important that when these differences of opinion show themselves, the grounds on which the former decision was arrived at should be there in a simple, easily intelligible, easily accessible form. Then there will be the *data* which will enable those who take up for the second time or the third time the reconsideration of these old problems to cover without trouble the ground already traversed and, if changes are necessary, to make them with the minimum of trouble, friction, waste of time, and inconvenience. When we remember how very hard-worked under modern conditions both Ministers and heads of Departments are, I think even the mere saving of time, let alone the increased clearness with which these grounds will be apprehended if they are put on record, is of the utmost importance. Of course the decision arrived at next week or the week after next binds nobody. It expresses the opinion of this Committee at the moment, and does not bind even them not to reconsider their decision if new facts come up. It does not bind the Cabinet of whom they are only the advisers; still less does it bind their successors in office. They will approach the consideration or reconsideration of these great problems absolutely unhampered. But, whilst they are unhampered by the decisions of their predecessors, they will be fully informed of the grounds upon which those decisions have been arrived at. That is the first great difference between the new Defence Committee and the old Defence Committee. The Committee will keep records, and the records will not consist of bare resolutions, saying so many men are required for this or that purpose, so many ships are necessary for this or that need. We shall have something much more than that, namely, the full-blooded and detailed account of the reasons on which the conclusions come to are based. The second difference is as to the actual constitution of the Committee. It differs fundamentally from anything that can be described as a Cabinet Committee which, as far as my experience goes, has ever existed in the past.

I think it is all the more important that I should explain to the House the constitution of the Committee which we have provisionally, at all events, determined upon, because I think that something which I said at Liverpool may have created some misconception in the public mind on the subject. Our view is this—that there must be a fixed nucleus in this Committee. If you do not have that, you do not have continuity. If every time a topic is to come up you re-create your Committee, there is evidently not that continuity of consideration which I am sure is all-important if really valuable conclusions are to be arrived at. That is the first condition we lay down.

The second condition we lay down is that this fixed and permanent nucleus should not be too large. It is very easy to say, and we all are tempted to say, that every available person who could give a valuable contribution to the discussion of the strategical subjects should be admitted to this Committee. I am quite sure that those who have seen much of committee work will not be misled by that view. A committee to do anything must not be too large. It is perfectly true that by restricting the numbers you will exclude from your councils, from your immediate discussions, persons of great capacity and great knowledge, whose opinion would be eminently worth having; but the main point is to have the machine a working machine—a machine that really can get through the extraordinarily complicated and difficult problems with which it has to deal, which it would never do if its members were permitted to grow beyond certain narrow limits. Therefore there must be a permanent nucleus, and the nucleus must not be too large. The permanent nucleus which we have tentatively, provisionally at all events, determined upon, makes the Cabinet members of the Committee consist of the Lord President, the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for War, and the First Lord of the Admiralty. It makes the non-Cabinet members of the Committee the First Sea Lord, the Commander-in-Chief, the Head of the Naval Intelligence, and the Head of the Military Intelligence. That I think is quite large enough for that continuous and permanent nucleus of which I spoke just now. I think, though I am not sure, that I misled the public by an incautious phrase at Liverpool. Whilst that is a permanent nucleus it does not mean that the gentlemen I have enumerated are for all purposes and on all occasions to constitute the whole of the Defence Committee. For instance, it would be quite absurd for the Defence Committee to discuss any problem involving the expenditure of public money without asking the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take part in our deliberations. It would be quite impossible for the Committee to discuss such problems, for example, as the defence of India, without asking the Secretary of State for India and his military advisers also to take part in our deliberations. It would be quite impossible to discuss any problem in which were closely intertwined the current questions of diplomacy without begging the Foreign Secretary to come and give us his opinion and advice. Whilst I mention those particular Members of the Cabinet as obviously being required from time to time, I do not mean to exclude other Members who, for any particular reason, may be required to help us; nor do I absolutely exclude the introduction of other Members who are not Members of the Cabinet, though on the whole I am disposed to think they should as a rule come as witnesses rather than as Members. On the other hand, I pronounce nothing more than a tentative opinion. That is the constitution of the Committee as we have conceived it. It differs, of course, from the old Committee in the fact that it has upon it an important body of experts; and there are some who, I think, would wish to go farther and would like to have a Committee of Defence entirely composed of military and naval experts who should discuss these problems among themselves and then go to the Cabinet with a cut-and-dried opinion upon the various points submitted to them or upon the points which they think ought to be brought to the notice of the Government. Personally, I am strongly opposed to that. Remember that has been tried, and within its limits has been extremely useful. There is at this moment a Joint Committee of the Army and Navy, to whom a great many problems have been submitted, and who have given very valuable assistance.

In my judgment the Committee of Defence, if it is to be worth anything, must contain a strong Cabinet element. I believe that to be important for many reasons. I believe it to be very important for constitutional reasons—from this point of view, among others, that Cabinet opinions come to the Cabinet with a very different kind of weight to the opinions of mere experts. And, further, I think that, as the decisions will have been arrived at by the help of members of the Cabinet, they will, whatever their value may be, receive a deference and support which they never could or would receive if they were simply thrown at the heads of the Cabinet from outside. That is a reason, I think, everybody will agree with; but there is another reason with which there may not be equal agreement. I have the profoundest respect, need I say, for expert opinion, whether naval or military; but I cannot help thinking that even the best of soldiers and the best of sailors give a better opinion after they have been thoroughly cross-examined by civilians than they do before they have undergone a process which, I hope, is not unpleasant, but may be long and laborious. This Defence Committee, as I need not say, will be full of instruction for civilians and Cabinet Members, and I hope it will not be without its instruction for even soldiers and sailors. I entirely agree with those critics of our old system, our old national system, in which the Navy decided its own affairs without consulting the Army, and the Army decided its own affairs without reference to the Navy—I agree that was a very faulty system. That is cured by bringing soldiers and sailors face to face on this Committee. While the soldiers will benefit from the sailors and the sailors from the soldiers, I hope both will benefit from the civilians; at any rate, I am vain enough of the class to which I belong to think that that happy result may not be impossible. I really think I have now said all that I need say, except to give two warnings to the House. One is that I regard this as experimental and tentative. I hope and believe it will bear most valuable fruit. I hardly dare hope that it is incapable of modification in detail, or perhaps even more than detail. I think experience, and experience only, will show how it works. Therefore, I do not set it before the House as a scheme to which we are unalterably attached in all its details; but I lay it before the House as a great experiment on a great subject—an experiment, however, I ought to add, which, from the very brief period in which we have tried it, I am inclined to think is likely to do, if not all, yet much of what its fondest parents have ventured to hope from it.

The only other point is just to remind the House of what everybody knows, but which we are all liable to forget, that however well you constitute your Committee you must not expect too much from it. I have heard in the many criticisms of our military system, of which the last few years have naturally been filled—I have heard it thrown out that everything would go smoothly in war if only those most qualified by knowledge and general intelligence had considered the problem. Well, war is much too full of surprises to allow of prophecies by any set of prophets, however certain they may be. Constitute your Committee and your Intelligence Department as you will, you will have in any war in which you may unhappily be engaged, many surprises, not all, I hope, unpleasant, but all quite beyond the purview of even the boldest and most experienced prophet. Then is the time when the happy but irresponsible critic comes down and says, "Why did you not foresee this, that, or the other?" Well, the more we try to foresee the better; but, try as one will, no reconstruction of Departments, no attempt, however successful, to bring the best brains of the Empire to deal with the Empire's problems will prevent difficulties arising in time of stress. War is full of the unexpected. But though that be so, it ought not to cool our efforts or chill our enthusiasm for any change really for the benefit of our naval or military organisation; and I cannot help thinking that the experiment which we have begun—though we begin it in no vainglorious or over-confident spirit—may yet prove not inefficacious to carry out the great ends for which it is designed. I beg to move the Resolution of which I have given notice.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the growing needs of the Empire require the establishment of the Committee of Defence on a permanent footing."—(*Mr. Balfour.*)

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) said the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, in an answer given to-day, said he was not disposed to suggest or impose on railway companies a return as to a surprise month. Now we have a "surprise" day in our proceedings here. The right hon. Gentleman has found an idle day apparently at the very beginning of the session when the Government are not prepared for discussion of their business, and he uses the time for the purpose of endeavouring to induce the House to accept this Resolution. Until we heard his explanation we were in ignorance of what the Resolution pointed to at this moment. Let me at once say there cannot be two opinions as to the necessity for taking this large, broad, and comprehensive view of the naval and military needs of the country. Happily the days are over, which some of us may remember, when there used to be a sort of policy of "pull devil, pull baker" as between the two defensive services, and each set about its business without any reference to the ideas, the desires, or necessities of the other great service. Those days are gone, and this is a question of how far we may carry the ideas of a permanent and recorded series of decisions on military and naval questions. We are agreed up to this point; but as to the particular method by which it is to be accomplished, I think there is considerable room for variation of opinion; and I think the right hon. Gentleman has tried—no doubt involuntarily—not to force, but to tempt, the House into an expression of opinion, when the House really has not had time to consider the real nature of the proposal.

The right hon. Gentleman told us that in his speech at Liverpool he made a very incomplete statement, and, further, that in that statement he used some expressions which had given rise to misconception; and it was with that incomplete information, and possibly under the influence of this misconception, we came here to-day. Although the right hon.

Gentleman has made much clear that was obscure before, yet I think it would be a "strong order" to ask the House to commit itself to the endorsement of any proposal, good, bad, or indifferent, on such a subject at such short notice. The right hon. Gentleman set a precedent for this mode of dealing with a great military question two years ago, but I do not know that the precedent was a very happy one. We had been accustomed previously to hear the policy of the Minister explained in Committee of Supply, or other opportunity, and it was open to the House to take such line and express such opinion as it chose. But two years ago the right hon. Gentleman came down with a cut-and-dried Resolution, which he asked the House to accept, embodying the Army Corps scheme, which was accordingly, under the influence of Government authority, and, no doubt, of the feverish state of mind that then prevailed, accepted in haste by the House.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): In three months ?

SIR. H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes; that is a point in my favour. I say in haste. I call three months in haste. So very definite and particularised a scheme as that required more than three months for consideration in all its bearings. On that occasion the Secretary of State expounded his scheme on introducing the Estimates in March, and did not invite a decision from the House until May.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: You asked for it.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Not at all. All I know is I protested against it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: You wanted the discussion.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: But there are plenty of other means of discussing a matter without asking for definite approval of a particular scheme. The House has already repented of that definite approval. [Cries of "No, no."] Yes, so far as we can judge. ["No, no."] Well, I will leave hon. Members on the other side who are divided on the subject to settle the matter among themselves. Certainly a large number of those who then expressed the most complete approval of that scheme now appear by their voices, rather than by their votes, to have altered their opinions.

We come to a matter now which is less complicated, but one which is a very delicate constitutional question, and may give rise to great consequences in the future. We are asked to commit ourselves with only a few minutes' consideration to this proposal. I admit at once that as it stands on the Paper it is very vague; it commits no one to anything. What I would say generally upon the scheme is this: this Resolution embodies a mere pious opinion in which we would all be ready to join, viz., that the growing needs of the Empire require the establishment of the Committee of Defence on a permanent footing. I have no objection to that at all. [MINISTERIAL cheers.] I mean I have no objection to the words which I have read, but I may object very much, and many Members may object, to that which is read into the words, and that to which the House will be held to commit itself if it agrees to the words. The right hon. Gentleman says that in its present condition the Committee of Defence has not done all that he thinks it might do, and that he is now going to give it a more ambitious scope. He referred to the particular changes that were to be made. First of all, there is to be a fixed permanent nucleus. The first point that is raised is this: Is it desirable that these great officers of the two services, two representing the Navy and two the Army, should be actually members of this Committee ? That is the most important point of all. The members of the Government would have the means of ascertaining the views of these officers in any way they chose; they might call upon them to consider any or every question, and to hand in memoranda for the information of the Committee and the Cabinet. They might have them before the Committee, not exactly as witnesses, but as the confidential and intimate advisers of the Government. You could have them in that capacity if you liked, but if you make them members of the Committee you will interfere, or you may interfere, very seriously with that Ministerial and Cabinet responsibility which constitutes the foundation of our system of Government. The Minister must be supreme. The right hon. Gentleman thinks that he is supreme. In what way is he supreme? He is a colleague on the Committee of Defence with those who occupy these great positions in the two services; he sits side by side with them on the same footing. It is quite true that the Cabinet to which he and the other Ministers belong is behind the Committee, but he, after all, is the most influential member of the Cabinet, and the others who are on the Committee are, next to him, perhaps the most influential. How then is it possible to say that the Cabinet have the opportunity of over-riding, supervising and modifying the decisions of the Committee when the principal members of the Cabinet have themselves been members of the Committee?

Then we are told that the decisions of the Committee are to be recorded and handed down. I do not know how they are to be recorded, or who is to record them. I think the scheme can hardly have been fully thought out, because the right hon. Gentleman talks of a permanent nucleus. Where is the permanency of this nucleus? The Commander-in-Chief changes; the First Lord changes still oftener. We were told it was so awkward that a new mind had to be brought to bear upon these great questions, and to go over the ground that predecessors with minds equally acute and accomplished had alread gone over, and that this was to be avoided by giving to the Committee the element of permanency. But you do not give permanency to the Committee in the sense in which it is spoken of. But, after all, the decisions of the Committee are to be revised by the Cabinet; I am thankful for that, because the Cabinet, as a Cabinet, have to keep their eyes and ears open to other considerations altogether than those which the mere Committee of Defence, and especially the professional members of that Committee, would keep in view. Allusion has already been made to the strange absence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer from the Committee. I should have thought the question of finance—the question affecting the tax-payers—was perhaps the most important that could be considered.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR was understood to say that the question would be considered.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Then he will be a member, and in that case whoever may be a permanent member he will be, because I can hardly conceive any subject being brought before the Committee which does not, either remotely or directly, affect the interests in charge of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Committee of Defence having come to a certain conclusion, either in agreement or in disagreement with the professional members, the matter then goes to the Cabinet. The proposals made, the facts stated, and the arguments on each side are recorded for the instruction of future generations, but when the matter goes to the Cobinet, which surely is the most important moment of all, none of the reasons or the arguments which prevail in the Cabinet are ever recorded in any form. So that it seems to me that the right hon. Gentleman is running after something which cannot be accomplished when he seeks to have a record of the reasons for the conclusion arrived at. That there should be a record of the opinions of the professional members is perfectly right; I see no harm in that at all—in fact nothing but good. Let them have the fullest opportunity of stating their views. But when the members of the Cabinet have to decide upon the acceptance or the rejection of those views, a class of considerations and ideas come into play which it is impossible to place on record without the greatest inconvenience to the public interest. You must maintain your Cabinet secrecy. If you do not do so, I do not know where you will be landed. Cabinet secrecy must govern the decision come to by the Members of the Cabinet who are on the Committee.

These are the considerations which occur to me after hearing the right hon. Gentleman's statement, and I think they are deserving of full consideration. What, after all, is aimed at? What is the value of it? According to any reasonable plan, you will have the full mind of the professional adviser; the Cabinet Ministers and the civilians—for whom I was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman put in a word, because they are sometimes looked upon as of very little importance—will consider all that the professional advisers have said and come to their decision. But why should that be known to the general public? Is it to be known?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Certainly not.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Nothing at all? Is it not to be referred to by the Minister?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That depends on the Minister. I do not know that a Minister would not say that such and such a question was discussed, and such and such a decision arrived at. That depends on his discretion. But the proceedings of the Committee, of course, will not be published, but will be embodied in a confidential document.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand that any decision that is come to will not be binding in any way, either upon the individual Minister or upon any subsequent Minister.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course not.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Then I do not see what you gain by this elaborate machinery that you could not gain at this moment; and still less do I see why you come to the House of Commons and ask us to give our approval to this Resolution. You do not require legislation; you do not require a vote. Why should the House be asked to commit itself to a Resolution of this kind, which Resolution in its vague terms any one of us would accept, but which, as implying acquiescence in all the particulars of the scheme, is rather too much to demand on such short notice and with so little information as has been vouchsafed to us? On these grounds I think I should best represent my attitude in the matter, which is one of entire approval of the co-ordination of the two services, and of the power of securing the co-operation of the services and of enforcing on the heads of these services a large view, not only of their own interests but of the interests of the sister service. We all approve of that, but when you come to the question of the constitution of this body, as the right hon. Gentleman has described it, I think it is premature to ask the House to approve that which the Prime Minister himself says is after all but a tentative and experimental organisation. Therefore, Sir, I beg to move that this debate be now adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that upon this question nothing but the adjournment of the debate can be discussed. That, I think, is a most unreasonable proposal on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. With all respect to the House, if I may say so without rudeness, so far as the Government are concerned, it really matters not one farthing. We do not ask money for this scheme It is not to serve our interests as distinguished from those of anybody else But the House, having passed the Supplementary Estimates with a celerity quite unexampled, there was an opportunity, without interfering with the general programme of business, of finding a few hours in which hon. Members might express their views on this matter. The right hon. Gentleman now comes forward and tries to deprive the House of that opportunity. That seems to me a most unreasonable proceeding, and I strongly protest against it.

*MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): Before the House goes to a division, I should like to say a few words. I think the Prime Minister has some justification for what he has said, because the Motion has been merely one to enable him to explain, and others to express their views, as to the proposals; and certainly, as regards myself, I am not committed to this scheme in any shape or form. The Government will have the whole responsibility for whatever may happen as a result of it, and I think we should certainly give them an opportunity of setting up what has, in effect, been asked for so long, and I shall cordially support this proposal. I do not myself see the slightest necessity for a division. The Government admit the responsibility is theirs, and the House is now really going to get what has been asked for during the whole of the war. Over and over again it has been said, "Where are your expert opinions? Have you no record of them, so that we may have an opportunity of judging what they advised?" and so on. I understand that this Motion outlines something; this is going to be a business-like procedure on the part of the Government which will enable their successors to know the reasons upon which they have based their policy. I cannot, therefore see that any particular harm can be done. During the progress of the war many speeches were made, notably one by the Prime Minister, and which I will describe as the "man-in-the-street" speech.

*MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. Member that the only matter before the House is the Motion, and that when that is disposed of the hon. Gentleman will be at liberty to discuss the scheme.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand that the right hon. Gentleman recognises that there is no necessity for an expression of opinion from the House [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] and that he will not press for it on this occasion. I have not the slightest wish to prevent the House discussing or stopping the discussion in any degree. The House ought not to be asked, and it is unnecessary to ask it, to express an opinion to-day; but it will not be an undesirable thing that Members should have an opportunity of stating their views. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Withdraw."]

MR. KEARLEY: I should not have intervened in the debate had not the Motion for the Adjournment really forced the House to go to a division. But I am determined if it goes to a division that it should not be supposed that I and those who voted with my right hon. friend are hostile to the proposal of the Government, as I think the Prime Minister is justified in stating his position to the House. I always thought that a Motion such as this before the House was introduced as an act of courtesy on the part of the Government, and merely as a peg upon which a discussion might hang, so as to enable the House to form some idea as to what their scheme was in connection with the amendment of the Council of Defence of the Cabinet.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I do ask the Leader of the Opposition not to persist in this Motion. It is true that there has been a very short notice of the discussion, and it is true it would have been more convenient if more time had been allowed; but that also has some advantages, because, the debate coming as it does, nobody will take part in it except those who have given some time and attention to this subject. My right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury said that this is an experimeent, and that the Government have only made a provisional arrangement, and so forth. The Resolution he proposes is more or less of an abstract nature which only affirms permanency, and therefore what he has come down to the House to do—that i to ask the advice of the House—is a proper course to take. Under these circumstances I do trust that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition will not see fit to continue his Motion.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Is it understood that there is no intention of pressing this matter to a division? [MINISTERIAL cries of "No, no."] I think something of the kind was said. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Divide, divide."] I think everything the Prime Minister has said would be secured by an open discussion without having at the end of it a Party division. I therefore think it ought to meet with the approbation of everybody if we appeal to the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw his Motion on the understanding that the debate would be of that open character. I respectfully appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury to say whether the object he has in view would not be best served in that way instead of taking a hurried division.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I think the House may be in some danger of proceeding to a division under a misunderstanding. I am quite sure there is nothing further from my right hon. friend's mind than to press for a division. There is nothing further from my mind than to oppose this Motion. The right hon. Gentleman has admitted that this comes as a surprise to the House. Granting the right hon. Gentleman has yielded to pressure from this side of the House, we are not prepared to say "yes" or "no" to a proposition which was made known to us only to-day. The entire purpose of a Motion for Adjournment is to prevent a final decision being claimed at this moment when we are imperfectly acquainted with the significance of the Motion, and we desire the right hon. Gentleman to assure us that he does not mean to force an expression of opinion from the House, and that time will be given not only to consider the contents of the right hon. Gentleman's most important statement, but also his omissions. I would suggest that the Colonies should have been left out altogether, and I object to being called upon to express any final opinion upon this proposal. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not claim a division upon this question.

Question put, and negatived.

Main Question again proposed.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): I think it is a satisfactory fact that the Leader of the Opposition is in general agreement with the principle which the First Lord of the Treasury has laid down. The underlying idea of the First Lord's proposal is that there should be a permanent responsible and active brain exercising general control over the strength, organisation and distribution of the military and naval forces of the Empire, and for such an idea there can be nothing but praise. Indeed the constitution of such a Committee has been urged again and again in this House by many military reformers. Perhaps the most satisfactory feature of the whole scheme, which admittedly is only a tentative one, is that the Prime Minister himself will take the chairmanship of that body, because it is he, and he alone, who can be really responsible for the co-ordination and control of the two services. The next point, in order of importance, is that the Committee is to have certain permanent features and that it will, at any rate, keep permanent records. It seems to me that this element of permanency is the very essential of efficiency, and the only means of obviating what the Americans call "panic" legislation and trusting to muddling through when the emergency comes. I most strongly deprecate the disparaging and almost sneering tone which has been adopted towards this Committee during the recent debate on Army organisation. I cannot refer to what was said in that debate, but I cannot help thinking that such criticism is ungracious and bad tactics in addition. I think the better course would be to back up the formation of this Committee in every way, and make it clear that we intend to maintain a watchful and friendly interest in its proceedings. I think there is ample reason to believe that the Prime Minister is enthusiastic, and really roused to the vital necessity of a Committee of this kind. I have every reason to hope that the right hon. Gentleman will not allow it to sink into noxious desuetude like the old Committee of Defence, but I think it will be to the national interest that the right hon. Gentleman should be reminded as early and often as possible that the country will take a deep interest in the work of that Committee, and they will judge of its usefulness entirely by results.

The Committee undoubtedly supplies a long-felt want. It is well to bring the responsible Ministers and the chief experts face to face, deliberating not in pairs or in corners, but at a round table, so that they shall have to play their own hand openly in the presence of other counsellors. Bacon shrewdly said that "private opinion is more free, but opinion expressed before others is more reverend." I venture to say that this Committee will not command the full confidence of the country unless it occasionally results in the resignation either of the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Secretary of State for War, or the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I think the vital need of this Committee has never been more forcibly illustrated than by the circumstances in which the present Army Reorganisation Scheme has its genesis. That scheme is a reflection of the alarm that took possession of the public mind some two years ago. The Secretary of State for War, unaided—and I do not wish to blame him for this—had to interpret the national but distracted yearning for Army reform, and the House of Commons and the country had to accept his scheme, as they were not able to think of anything better at the moment. Not having the guidance of a Committee such as this, or of any responsible body which had been continuously considering the question of the defence of the Empire for a long period, the Secretary of State evolved a scheme which was designed mainly apparently for repelling the invasion of these islands. The country supported him because we were at that moment engaged in a land war, the result of which was that our chief national need appeared to be a great Army. If I may use a metaphor, the country was rather in the position of a sea monster gasping out of its natural element, and not knowing what to do except to flop about. If the Boers had been a maritime nation, and had succeeded at the outset in inflicting some small naval reverses upon us, the First Lord of the Admiralty would have been the interpreter of the nation's fears, and we should have been busy voting flying squadrons and other additions to our naval strength. I almost wish under the circumstances that the Boers had been a maritime nation.

It is surely altogether wrong, however, that the general policy of our Imperial defence should be based either on the evanescent fears of a people at war or on the unaided interpretation of those fears by the War Minister. It should be based rather, I believe, upon a continuous and systematic study of this whole question by experts, and their studies should be directed, not to the needs of the moment, but to the normal requirements of Imperial defence. It is at such crises as that which occurred two years ago that the imagination of any single Minister must prove unequal to the strain, and it is for that reason that the need of a Council of Defence becomes more than ever necessary. Again, I cannot help thinking that if this Committee had been constituted earlier the results of the Colonial Conference might have been very different. My hope is, that if another Conference is arranged in the future, the Government will, at any rate, have come to some definite decision on the whole problem of Imperial defence, and thus obviate the possibility of such conflicting statements being made by the Parliamentary chiefs of the two fighting services—statements which added to the gaiety of all nations in the world, except our own. In view of the divergence of opinion expressed before the Colonial Conference by the Secretary of State for War and the First Lord of the Admiralty, I think it is hardly to be wondered at that the Colonial Premiers were not willing to accept the proposals for the joint defence of the Empire which were put forward, and I venture to say that if a comprehensive scheme had been put forward by a responsible Council of Defence, it would not have been at all impossible that the colonies would have been willing to consider it, and to take, at any rate, a reasonable share of the burdens involved. It is to be hoped that before another Conference takes place, this Committee will succeed in restoring conjugal relations between the Admiralty and the War Office, whose present incompatibility of temperament cannot be regarded as incurable. I think that the foregoing illustrations establish the need for a Committee of this kind.

As to the functions of the Committee, I desire to say a few words. I am grateful to the Prime Minister for constituting the Committee, and I am not inclined to look a gift horse in the mouth. On the other hand, I do not think he will resent any friendly criticism we may offer. I must therefore, in the first place, express disappointment at the answer he gave to a question I put a fortnight ago, from which I gathered that, not only would this year's Defence Estimates not be revised and approved by the Committee of Defence, but that he rather considered such work would be beyond the province of the Committee in future. He rather took the line that the Committee would not inquire into or advise with respect to all the details of the Estimates. I do not think that anyone in his senses intended that the Committee should do so, but it is difficult to see how they are going to have a co-ordinating control over the whole province of defence, if there is not also financial control, and I did certainly imagine that this Committee each year, after considering the strategic needs of the Empire and its financial resources at the time, would determine how much would be spent altogether on the defence of the

Empire, and that it would then determine how much of the grant should be allotted to the Army and how much to the Navy.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR was understood to say that the Committee would consider the needs of both services and determine the amount to be granted for the year.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: I am exceedingly glad to hear the Prime Minister's statement, because he has now informed me that the Committee will do exactly what I hoped in the first place it would do. I have no desire, of course, to go into details, and I think the statement which he has just made will be received with a great deal of relief; I mean that the amounts allotted respectively to the Army and the Navy will be settled in bulk by the Committee. After that the heads of the respective services will apportion them in detail. That will be, I may say, an exact reversal of the present system under which the two services are not co-operating but competing services, each playing for its own hand, and endeavouring to squeeze as much as possible out of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Owing to the fact that the Committee was not constituted earlier, so far as this year is concerned we shall have to vote £60,000,000 for national defence without the comforting assurance that the sums asked for have been reviewed and approved by the Committee. In fact, as far as this year's Estimates are concerned, we have to "go it blind." I do not wish to go into the question of the composition of the Committee, because I think the Prime Minister has given us a satisfactory assurance on that point. He has explained that there will be, in addition to the regular members, certain *ad hoc* members, and particularly that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will always be present when any matter involving expenditure comes under discussion. I do not think there can be any matters of Imperial defence which do not involve expenditure, and I think, therefore, we may look upon it that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be practically a permanent member of the Committee.

One other word only with regard to the composition. I hope that sometime in future we may find that the chief military and naval experts will not be the Commander-in-Chief and the First Lord of the Admiralty, but the two "Chiefs of Staff" of the great general staffs which should be constituted in the two services. But that is a matter of detail that can be better discussed on another occasion. I think on the present occasion we should avoid the discussion of strategic policies. I quite agree with the Prime Minister that it would be highly undesirable that Ministers should be asked questions in this House on delicate matters of international policy, and other matters bearing on strategic policy. I think the wiser course, and in every way the more desirable course, will be to judge of the work of the Committee entirely by results. With regard to results we have just heard the first fruits of the larger deliberations of this Committee. We have been informed that it is the intention of the Government to establish a naval base on the east coast. I think that will command the earnest approval of all who have studied recent developments affecting the balance of sea power and the altered strategic position of the Empire. Whether we approve of it or not, here is the first definite offspring of the collective wisdom of this Committee. [AN HON. MEMBER: "The old Committee."] I am afraid I have not sufficient confidence in the old Committee to imagine that this scheme was evolved by them. We do not know the exact reason that led this Committee, or the old Committee, to come to that conclusion, but it is sufficient that we should judge its usefulness and activity by results. If there should be no results, or if there should be no more signs of life than in the old Committee, which I have reason to believe passed away painlessly in its sleep, or if the results furnished by the Committee are considered to be inadequate or vicious by this House, then I think it would be necessary for Parliament to intervene, and it would know who is the responsible body, and who is to blame for any bad results. The weak point of our old system was that there was no one who was more than nominally responsible for any decision regarding defence. For example, if a new Army scheme was introduced which might be entirely unsuited to our needs, the Secretary of State for War would be regarded, I think justifiably, as being its author. Of course we know the usual reply is that the scheme would be the scheme of the Cabinet as a whole, but we know also that in practice the scheme would be essentially the creation of the Secretary of State for War, and that it would be only perfunctorily considered by the Cabinet as a whole, because the Cabinet consists of a number of hard-working and extremely busy heads of departments, who are absorbed in the details of those Departments, and who have, after all, their own axes to grind at subsequent Cabinet Councils.

MR. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford): The hon. Member assumes that the scheme I introduced to the House two years ago was not before the Defence Committee. As a matter of fact it was discussed at continued meetings of the old Defence Committee.

*MR. SPEAKER: I wish to remind the hon. Member that only in a limited degree does the question of Army organisation enter into this debate.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: I have no intention of debating the question of Army organisation. My argument was only directed to show that this Committee would in future be the responsible body for such a matter as a great Army scheme, and that the responsibility would be taken off the shoulders of my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War. As regards this Committee I hope it means the dawning of a new era. I hope it means that we shall be told, in the first place, what we keep the Army and Navy for and what is the extent of the work they are intended to do. I hope that when any new great scheme of Defence comes forward it will do so under the authority of this Committee of Defence, and I venture to say that if it does it will receive a very different response from that given to previous schemes which had been suspected, rightly or wrongly, of being the offspring of the unaided genius of a single civilian Minister. If this Committee comes up to our expectations—and I think it is only wise at the outset that we should be sanguine, as well as jealously watchful on this point—I hope that for the first time in our history the great problems of Imperial defence will be intelligently thought out, continuously studied, permanently recorded, and periodically dealt with by a Committee which, however it may err in the judgment of posterity, will at any rate be thoroughly representative, and beyond all excuse responsible.

* SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): If my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition had made his Motion, or caused the Motion to be made by one of his friends later in the afternoon, I think the grounds he gave for it would have been very strong indeed. The difficulty of agreeing to that course was that if my right hon. friend, having Constitutional objections, which I do not say he entertained, but at any rate foreshadowed, took the opportunity of putting them before the House, he would shut out other hon. Members than himself from stating their views. My right hon. friend probably entertains Constitutional objections to the proposal which has been put before the House, and I think some hon. Members sitting behind him entertain economic, or taxpayers' objections, which I would support if I shared their views. I should like very briefly to state certain views, which I know are not shared by the right hon. Gentleman, which I entertain on this question. The Leader of the Opposition referred to those conflicts between the Army and Navy, those struggles between them to gain the ear of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, those different views on subjects of defence which prevailed in the past, which we all recognise as having prevailed in the past, and which have been alluded to by the Prime Minister—stated that these days were gone. Part of our case in asking publicly and privately for this discussion is, that up to the present time I do not think these days are gone; that there have been flagrant examples of these evils recently, and that the Estimates to be considered next week will show continuous examples. That makes it necessary the new departure should be made, and that we should try to strengthen the control of the Prime Minister in the Cabinet in this departure.

I confess that I, for one, have always attached the highest importance to strengthening the interest and the knowledge of the Prime Minister in what is going on in the War Office and at the Admiralty. That is the real key to the situation, and it is the Prime Minister alone who can effectually represent the Treasury. The Prime Minister is First Lord of the Treasury, and it is idle to suppose that in surveying the deliberations of this Committee, he would not have the taxpayers' interests and finances in view. I believe that that would not be the case. There is a conflict to-day between the Ministers representing the Army and the Navy, but if these days of conflict are over when have they gone, and how long have they gone? Personally, I think that this proposal, instead of being made too suddenly, has come too late, that the Cabinet has spent a great deal of money unnecessarily, and that the country has been involved in evil organisation which might have been avoided if this step had been taken earlier. The active co-ordination and co-relation of all the branches of the two Services can only become effective on the Estimates for the year 1904-5; and on the Estimates for the next financial, year to be presented to us next week, we shall not be able to discuss the subject. This of itself almost proves the case that it has come very late, instead of very soon.

I venture to criticise the arguments of the Leader of the Opposition, because this is a matter of first-class national importance, on which men of the same Party and even the same section of the Party, can entertain different views. My right hon. friend objects to the scheme because he suspects that it may lead to interference with Cabinet responsibility. It seems to me that Cabinet responsibility is complete. The Committee of the Cabinet is not a body with so many Members with so many purposes, who show their hands when they come to vote. The Prime Minister should have that prominence which his position commands. He may demand the resignation of all his colleagues, and he can form a new Administration. The opinion of the Prime Minister must therefore prevail, and where there is an essential difference of opinion between the Prime Minister and his colleagues, his opinion is the one which carries weight. As regards outsiders having too great weight on such Committee, it is rather an idle fear. It seems to me that soldiers and sailors in giving advice are too deferential, and are too much afraid to put their own opinions before the Cabinet. They almost need to be encouraged to tell the Cabinet the truth. These Cabinet Committees are not very rigid bodies, consisting of so many members with so many votes. I confess that it seems to me it would be impossible to go behind a statement of the Prime Minister, when Indian, colonial, or financial Affairs are being decided upon. Of course, Ministers concerned with their special Departments would be called to give their opinion. The strongest objection which I thought my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition made was, that although there was a very careful arrangement for recording the opinion of this Defence Committee, the Cabinet might overrule that opinion on sound grounds, and that there would be no opportunity of knowing the opinion of the Cabinet. But there is a power to leave minutes of what has been decided at Cabinet meetings, which has been occasionally exercised when it is desirable that the Cabinet should leave their opinion on record for the information of their successors.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I have read the memoirs, and I believe that these minutes are never left for the new Ministers. Only two copies are made. One is handed to the Sovereign, and the other is retained by the Prime Minister.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: There have been references to minutes of Cabinet meetings which have been made in some form or another to be handed to their successors. There is no Constitutional objection to that course being taken if the Defence Committee has put forward deliberately an opinion on matters of first-class importance, and that opinion is overruled by the Cabinet. The need for some better arrangement than the old Cabinet Committee, as framed in the last days of the last Liberal Administration, seems to me proved by an immense number of separate facts which are well known to Members of this House. I will not debate again the different statements made to the Colonial Conference on behalf of the Army and Navy, except to say that that could not have occurred, especially in a matter of such moment, if there had been a due and proper supervision of the work. This is what accounts for the overwhelming importance which I attach to the influence which the Prime Minister should have in the deliberations of this Defence Committee. He alone can bring the diverging views of these great Departments into harmony. Untold harm has been done by this divergence in letting slip and spoiling the opportunities which the Colonial Conference presented. There is one matter which illustrates that view and has not been mentioned hitherto, and it shows the need for the improvement of this Defence Committee which we are now discussing. A Memorandum was put before the Colonial Conference on the organisation of colonial troops for Imperial service. That Memorandum begins by stating :—

> "Prior to the outbreak of the War in South Africa, so far as any general scheme for the defence of the Empire as a whole had been considered (very damaging words these are) it was assumed that the military responsibilities of our great self-governing colonies were limited to local defence, and that the entire burden of furnishing reinforcements to any portion of the Empire against which a hostile attack in force might be directed must fall on the Regular Army. There may possibly have been some pious hope that in time of need the colonies might rally to the Mother Country, but no definite arrangements were made, nor were inquiries even on foot, as to whether such aid might be expected, and, if so, in what strength. Indeed, the necessity for it was by no means realised, and its reliability was doubted."

All through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the colonies took an almost preponderating part in the defence of the Empire; and that shows the necessary importance of the preface to the Memorandum which I have quoted.

Then the Memorandum goes on :—

> "The present war has, in fact, been a valuable illustration of the necessity for organising the defence of the Empire against far graver contingencies; and it is essential to preparation, that it should be definitely known in peace what forces can be relied on in war. Success in a great war can only be insured by a continuous policy of careful organisation and preparation in peace."

This Memorandum also states that New Zealand as long ago as 1900 passed a Statute—which was mentioned in this House at the time—actually constituting an Imperial Reserve for Imperial purposes. Yet that matter was allowed to slumber and was not taken up in any way. The Colonial Conference failed very largely through the difference of opinion between the Army and Navy, which the personal supervision of the Prime Minister, with the highest advice behind him, might have prevented.

I will briefly mention a series of questions which occurred during the last few years to illustrate the inability displayed by the old Committee of the Cabinet to deal with them. My right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition has assented, and my right hon. friend the Member for Dundee has not very willingly, assented to the working of the old Committee. The Leader of the Opposition was a Member of the Cabinet when the Committee was first constituted, and he assented to its working; but the Committee could not satisfactorily have carried out some of its work, because the work it ought to have done was ill-done. I think that is the universal opinion as regards some five or six questions which may be mentioned. Take a connected class of questions, three or four of them being very much of the same kind; the Cunard agreement, the steamship subsidy question, and the importance of the Merchant Fleet as a true reserve for the Navy in the time of war, the questions which arise in connection with the deputation which is taking place to-day, questions, for example, such as that which was raised in this House by Lord Charles Beresford as to the insurance of merchant shipping in the time of war. The questions I have named have all more or less in the past, during the reign of the old form of Committee, been dealt with by the Board of Trade on strategic or naval grounds. I think that may be said of all of them; deputations have been received by the Board of Trade, and their representations have been considered by the President of the Board of Trade on strategic or naval grounds, with some advice from the Admiralty behind him in some cases, though not in that emphatic way in which they will be considered by the new form of the Committee. Of course, I am assuming that this Committee will have all the virtues. We do discern in the new Constitution that responsibility of the Prime Minister, with the best advice behind him, which, as my hon. and gallant friend says, will tend to greatly improve the Committee.

On the last occasion when it was supposed we were very near a great war with a European Power, a conference was called at the Peninsular and Oriental offices by Sir Thomas Sutherland. It was a secret conference, and nothing that passed there got into the newspapers. It was a conference of a most interesting and valuable character, and the speech made at that conference on these very subjects—the insurance of ships and food supply—by Sir Thomas Sutherland was one of the greatest importance. It was, I am afraid, shown by the speeches of the great shipowners that these questions had not at that time been thought out by any Department of the State. These men had approached Departments of the State, and they knew what had been considered and what had not been considered; and it came out clearly that no one representing the State had thought out these questions. I confess I cannot but think that if a Committee in the constitution of which the Prime Minister takes so much interest, and which he has explained to the House in language so exact, had been in existence, all these questions would have been thought out by the Committee and the Cabinet, which at that time were left to the President of the Board of Trade. There was one other question of a similar kind the details of which were left to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who received deputation after deputation in the past—not recently—with regard to strategic cables and the question of cable communication in time of war. This question was dealt with by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on strategic grounds, and while we have the highest respect for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, it was not entirely satisfactory that a matter of such importance as arranging for a possible war should be dealt with except by a Committee of Cabinet. All these are types of questions in which mistakes were admittedly made during the time of the old Committee. The Prime Minister alluded in his opening speech to the case of Wei-hai-Wei; he did not name it, but from the description he gave of the differences which had occurred between one Lord of the Admiralty and another he was evidently alluding to it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I was not alluding to We-hai-Wei.

*SIR C. DILKE: At all events, on that occasion the Lords of the Admiralty gave opposite opinions to the Government. One opinion was expressed by Lord Charles Beresford on the day of the occupation of Wei-hai-Wei, and was openly contradicted on behalf of the Government, though it was afterwards admitted to have been correct. There is a matter to which I alluded the other day, and which has been dealt with by a representative of the Home Office, advised by the War Office. The States of Jersey sent a deputation to this country with reference to defence, but the Admiralty was not consulted, and it was the Assistant Secretary for the Home Office who had to cram, on the advice of the War Office, military views down the throats of the deputation without having had any advice from the Admiralty. Then there was another matter which came up the other day. Years ago the country was greatly excited about coaling stations, and Lord Brassey and others took a deep interest in the subject, and a scheme was resolved upon. One of the coaling stations which was of great importance at that time was not kept up in the way intended, its garrison dwindled away, and it is impossible to find who is the person responsible. All we know is that all these mistakes have been made under the reign of the old Committee, and while those who are pessimists and while those who, like my hon. friend the Member for Dundee, who does not believe in Committees, may say that the new Committee will be no better than the old, those who are optimists believe that even by the expression of our views we shall do something to realise the hopes we entertain, and make the Government also realise the responsibility which falls on the Prime Minister. At all events we have shown that improvement is essential, and that there is need for increased co-ordination and a clearer view. Personally I believe that economy can be promoted by this more specific view. It cannot, I believe, lead to war or to a more reckless expenditure. We cannot have a

Committee of this kind presided over by the Prime Minister without saving money to the State, without decreasing ill-expended money, and spending the money of the State to better advantage.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I rejoice that the opportunity has been offered to this House to discuss this very important proposal now in process of being carried out; and I rejoice that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition did not press his Amendment. I will not trouble the House at any length, but there are one or two observations which I should wish to make. In my humble judgment the step that has been decided on is the most important one that has yet been taken in the interests of economy. We cannot trace the history of the expenditure of the country without seeing how we have oscillated in response to the popular clamour or emotion of the moment, without any regard for principle whatever. That was a change which was initiated in 1860. There was in that year a public panic—which, by the way, created the Volunteer force—and Lord Palmerston rushed a Royal Commission to inquire into the defence of this country against invasion. The country flew to arms, and as a result we embarked on that policy of gigantic works of which Portsmouth now remains the monument, and the visible expression of vast expenditure to protect our naval arsenals from attack by land. Since that time we have gone on developing that policy, and we have spent millions and millions on gigantic works all over the world. I would put it to any student of this question whether, if such a Committee as that now proposed had been in existence, with its records and evidence before it, such vast expenditure could possibly have been incurred. Of course it could not. Therefore, if I were asked to put in order of merit my reasons for rejoicing at the Prime Minister taking this step, my first reason would be on grounds of public economy. The Committee will give us more value for our money, and it will certainly tend to continuity of policy. As I see it, it is a great instrument which will impress the minds of Ministers, and which will put shortly what I might call the perspective of British defence.

To illustrate what I mean, let me say this: I think everyone will admit, now that the excitement of the war is over, and that nothing else is happening to interest the country in naval and military affairs, that there will certainly be a cry for economy, and the cry will be with regard to the Navy and the Army. There was that feeling in the country at the time of Lord Randolph Churchill's resignation, and what did the Chancellor of the Exchequer do? I presume, of course, that it was settled by the Government that there should be a reduction of expenditure for defence. We know what happened. They did not look round and see what expenditure could most reasonably be reduced or what they could best spare. What happened was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer issued a mandate to the Admiralty and to the War Office asking them to reduce their Votes by half-a-million each. The real point is that the reduction should be made in the Estimates of the next year on what could best be spared. There, I think, we get the safeguard that when a reduction has to be negotiated by the necessities of the case, the matter will be really considered, and the expenditure will come off that which will least affect or injure the country.

There is one Member on this Council to whom no reference has been made at all. We have had no reason given why the office of Lord President of the Council is represented on this Committee. In my judgment the question of the defence of the Empire embraces all things connected with the adequate defence of the Empire as a whole, including the combining of all parts of the Empire in its defence. Without that principle the Empire cannot endure. I look, therefore, for a Council where the contributing parts of the Empire shall have a place, and I think it ought to be the Privy Council. Therefore I would like to see this Council the germ of a development in that direction, because I am convinced that in the future the whole Empire will have to bear the burden of its defence. I see in this the germ of an instrument which will be necessary when the Colonies take their share in the cost of Imperial defence I regard this Council, therefore, as a step forward, and I trust that little attention will be paid to those who expect too much from it at first, and that we shall not be engaged in pressing Ministers to have the Council consider this or to consider that. I think such a course would be a mistake. If I know anything about the subject at all, I think the Council will take some time to grasp the salient features of the question, and to lay down conclusions as to the main principles.

I cannot sit down without saying that one of the reasons why the constitution of this Committee has been received with general satisfaction is because public opinion has become more intelligent, and more educated, as to the necessities of the case. I think the debates in the House this year on the Army Estimates have shown a gradual sense of the fact that you cannot treat the Army as lying entirely outside the subject of naval defence, and that the general line of our military policy must be influenced not only by our naval policy but also our naval necessity. I foresee also that this House will, before very long, see the necessity of enlarging the scope of debates regarding the question of the military policy of this country. I think that the debate on the Address shows that the House has become fully alive to the fact that it is not practicable—it is not possible—to really discuss our military policy in its broad features if the procedure of the House prevents our dealing with those broad naval considerations which influence this matter. In the long run I think we shall find this Committee of Defence will inevitably tend in the same direction—towards the enlargement of the procedure of this House. Suppose, having reviewed everything, the Ministers responsible for the defence of the country find there must be a reduction of expenditure, and suppose they propose to reduce the expenditure on the Volunteers or the Militia, or something else of that kind; they have to defend their policy in this House, and their policy would be dependent on their naval necessity. Therefore, looking at the question from, as I think, the proper point of view, namely, that of economy in dealing with the taxpayers' money, and from every point of view comprised in the question of the defence of the Empire, I am of opinion that no wiser step has ever been taken in the true direction. It is perhaps well that it has not been too long a step, but I am certain it contains the germ of something greater yet to come.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: My hon. and gallant friend began his observations by alluding to the Motion for the Adjournment made by my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition as being in some way intended to stifle discussion.

SIR JOHN COLOMB: I must apologise if I used the wrong word. I meant stop the discussion.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The real meaning of that Motion was not to stifle discussion at all, but to have a full and considered discussion. It is not without significance that we notice now that the vast majority of those who two hours ago clamoured for an immediate discussion on this subject were so easily satisfied that they departed from the House immediately, and have not returned. Now in the little that I have to say on this subject I am embarrassed by the procedure on which we are to proceed. I know very little about the Army, but with the little knowledge I possess I protest against this discussion. Let me remind the House that until yesterday the fact that this question would be raised was entirely unknown to anybody, unless the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean was a preferred and privileged party.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: No, I was not.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The First Lord of the Treasury, defending his action in submitting this great proposition to the House, said he had put it forward under pressure from this side of the House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is no reason why this should have been brought before the House at all, and it would not have been brought forward had it not been for the desire on the part of hon. Gentlemen to discuss it.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I do not mean to deny that there was any desire on either side to discuss it, but that pressure, if any, was that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean. But the fact remains that until this morning we did not even know the terms of the Resolution, much less what its form was intended to convey to the House. My right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean has spoken of me as in some way being opposed to the Committee. I think that is a little unfair.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: I did not mean to be unfair. I only gathered from previous debates that the hon. Member did not believe very much in any of these Committees.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: As a fact the pressure brought to bear in those debates was upon the Admiralty. I am in no way committed against the principle of a Committee of Defence, but the first germ was naturally a small one, and the first question was apparently a more specific and limited question than was anticipated. What is it we all desire to have? In early days all that was admitted was that the Navy and Army should be considered together as two parts of one whole; that they should not be considered separate Departments, like the Post Office and the Home Office, but that every proposal made for the Army and the Navy should be the result of a joint investigation into the needs of both. But there has been a great difference in latter years. We all remember how two years ago the Secretary of State for War introduced his proposal with the extraordinary statement that it was based on the possibility of our at any moment losing the command of the sea. Now I think that the Navy and the Army ought to be considered together, and that could not possibly be unless they were considered by the same people. Therefore, instead of being an opponent, as the hon. Gentleman seemed to imagine, I may claim to be a supporter. But the right hon. Gentleman's proposal marks a totally new departure. Hitherto you have had a Committee of the Cabinet, with Cabinet authority in every one of its members, reporting, I suppose, to the Cabinet. Now you are to have what may be called a hybrid Committee, with a fixed nucleus consisting of four Cabinet Ministers. But in what sense is that a fixed nucleus? The present Lord President of the Council is to be on the fixed nucleus, but a future Lord President may not be. The only fixity that I can see is that four are to be members of the Cabinet for the time being. The Minister for War and the First Lord of the Admiralty must be on the Committee, and, as far as I can see, they are the only ones who will always be members of the Committee.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) said that the Prime Minister, when he spoke of the fixed nucleus, was referring to the four naval and military members.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: If I am to understand that the fixed nucleus consists of subordinate permanent officials, and the floating element of members of the Cabinet, then a new light altogether is thrown on the situation; and that is one of the advantages of having a discussion on the subject. But I venture to doubt whether the hon. Gentleman is correctly representing his Leader. I understood him to say that the fixed element was the Cabinet element. ["No."] Then the fixed nucleus is to consist of four Cabinet Ministers, not necessarily always representing the same offices, and of four subordinate officers always representing the same offices. My point, however, is that it is no longer a Committee of the Cabinet at all. Words were used by the Prime Minister which seemed to imply that, in addition to the eight members named by him, provision would be made for admitting others from time to time. That is an essential part of the scheme, and I should like to have a clear and precise statement of the intentions of the Government on that point. In any case it is to be a mixed Committee, one half possessing complete executive authority, and the other half possessing nothing of the kind; and there may be great danger of a Committee so constituted degenerating into a pure fiction, as in the case of the Board of Trade.

Then there is this point of practical constitutional importance. This Committee is to pass resolutions and keep records. You cannot presume unanimity in a Committee of this sort; the resolutions therefore will be arrived at after debate and division. So this consultative Committee may come to a decision in regard to which the Members of the Cabinet are in a minority. Three of the Cabinet Members may vote one way and the rest of the Committee the other. The resolutions will therefore go to the Cabinet, with the damning fact behind it that a majority of the Cabinet Ministers are against it. That is a point worth considering, at all events.

Then the Prime Minister says that the Parliamentary responsibility of the Cabinet is in no way to be interfered with. This Committee is not to be in any sense an executive body. It is not to have power to give directions to any Department, or to spend money, or to do anything except report to the Cabinet. It will be purely consultative, and on that point I wish to say a word or two about the concluding observations of the hon. and gallant Member who spoke last. As a purely consultative Committee, not a subordinate branch of the parent body—the Cabinet—which the present Committee of Defence is, I fail to see the cogency of the reasons given by the First Lord of the Treasury for limiting the members of the Committee as he has done. It is quite true that a large Committee is not likely to do as much work as a small Committee. But this Committee is not to do anything but advise, and why a Committee consisting of twelve should be less able to advise than a Committee of eight I cannot understand. That is why I find myself in agreement with the suggestion contained in the last words of the hon. and gallant Member, which was really the same suggestion I ventured to make on the Motion for Adjournment. On this consultative Committee you are putting four Members of the Cabinet and four officers of the Army and Navy. The Committee is to deal with the Army and Navy and nothing else. Why is not the whole Empire represented? Why not take this great opportunity of bringing the colonies into some association with this Committee?

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): By means of permanent officials?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I should suggest the Agents General.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: They are not experts.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Neither are Cabinet Ministers experts, nor is this an expert Committee. This is a Committee to advise, and for my part I heartily agree with the sentiments expressed by the hon. and gallant Member for Yarmouth that the whole of the colonies are as much interested and concerned in this question of Imperial defence as are the people of these islands.

SIR JOHN COLOMB: Except that they do not contribute so largely.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: That is the point I am making under more persuasive, judicious methods than have hitherto been employed. I think the great self-governing colonies may come directly into the list of contributors. That would be my own desire. I would not put it by way of a demand, but I should have thought that there was a fine possibility of this being one of the ways of securing that end—by inviting, on certain occasions at any rate, representatives of the colonies to sit on this consultative body. When I read the terms of the Resolution, I had no doubt that some such hint would be dropped by the Prime Minister. The "growing needs of the Empire" are merely the needs of the two great arms which serve the whole Empire, and to the support of those arms I believe the self-governing colonies will ultimately contribute. There would have been no difficulty, as far as I can see, in associating them in some degree with this consultative body, and I regard it as an omission that no suggestion that such a possibility would be recognised was made in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. But, after all, this is an experimental discussion of a great experiment. I do not condemn the principle, or the particular proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, but I must associate myself with the desire expressed by the Leader of the Opposition that the final decision of the House should not be claimed on this great experiment until full discussion has been given to it.

COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, Bootle): I do not often trouble the House with an expression of opinion, but to-day I feel called upon to offer a few remarks in reference to this Resolution. This is a fresh matter in the modern history of the Empire, because we have had formally introduced for the consideration of the House what I might call a scheme of Imperial policy—a policy which will apply not only to the land, but also to the sea. Whether a man fights on the sea or on the land the principles of strategy are unchanged, and it is for the purpose of considering these strategic needs of the Empire that this Committee of Defence is to be called into operation. I had the privilege of hearing this proposal introduced by the Prime Minister at Liverpool, and I can only say that the impression it produced upon the highly intelligent audience there was not exceeded by the impression which, I think, it has made on the minds of many Members in the House to-day. The details were not so fully gone into on that occasion as they have now been, but at any rate the outline of the scheme was presented to the meeting. The scheme to-day has been more fully described, and although it is a somewhat difficult thing on a question of this kind to throw fresh light upon it, after it has been exhaustively considered by various other speakers who have dealt with it before, yet still there may be one or two points upon which a few remarks may be made.

One point in this scheme which appears to me to be of great importance is that professional opinion is brought into juxtaposition with the opinion of Ministers who will have weight with their *confrères* of Cabinet rank. What we have all been wanting for years past—by "we" I mean those who have given thought to the military needs of the Empire—is that somehow or other the actual requirements of the Navy and of the Army should be put into shape by great naval or military officers, and in that concrete form should be brought to bear upon the minds of Cabinet Ministers, who should themselves have power to put them into execution. What is required for the military needs of the Empire—which includes the naval needs—is that the responsible officers at the head of these two great services should report fully upon what in their opinion would be the actual naval or military needs for the time being. Then the question arises as to whom they should make their report. At the present time, and under the present scheme, the responsible heads of the two great services will be able to lay the needs of their services respectively before Cabinet Ministers, whose presence there will ensure their being thoroughly gone into and put into an efficient action. It has been objected by one or two speakers who have preceded me that this Committee of Defence will have no power to spend money and no executive power whatever. That is perfectly true, but it will have the power of putting things into an authoritative form which must command consideration from those who have the power of carrying them into effect—that is the Cabinet—and it will set forth the result of professional opinions, for which they are professionally responsible; and therefore we have introduced for the first time into our national military policy a principle of responsibility as well as of continuity in administration.

Now I take it that in the national military policy for the defence of this Empire the three points we have to bear in mind before all others are, first of all, continuity of administration, secondly, efficiency, and thirdly, responsibility. And it does seem to me that these three points are considered in the present scheme of national defence, and that there is a reasonable possibility if this scheme is carried into effect—as I trust it may be at the very earliest possible time—that these three great principles of continuity of administration, of efficiency, and of responsibility will for the first time be put into a form by which they may bear fruit for the effective defence of the Empire. I was greatly pleased to hear that the Prime Minister, by the way in which he brought the scheme forward, considered that the Committee of Defence should be a small one. I have always believed in small Committees. Possibly the size of it in future may be increased, and if there is a future enlargement it may admit of some further representative element for our colonies. At any rate, I think in supporting the Minister in this view that at the present time it would be quite sufficient to have a Defence Committee of the proportions which he has suggested; and that when they have, so to speak, got into gear and working order and formulated the outlines of the plan, and, to some extent, the details of their working scheme, then will be the time when it will be fit to consider whether the Committee can or can not be enlarged. Exception was taken to this by the Leader of the Opposition, who said that it was a strong order that any decision should be come to upon this question to-day. I do not, of course, know what are the intentions of the Government upon the matter, but it does seem to me that an efficient scheme of national defence which we have been looking forward to for years has now been introduced.

Those of us to whom this subject is very dear—and I may say also that the public at large take an intelligent interest in this question — have been looking forward to this scheme, hoping to see it born, and we are glad to see this scheme officially introduced to the House of Commons by the Prime Minister to-day. It is my earnest desire that a decision may be come to as early as possible upon this Motion, provided that course meets with the approval of my right hon. friend who introduced it. I do not know that I should go into the question to-day, but I will merely conclude by saying that an advisory board, with an appeal to the Cabinet, is to-day to be created; that it will receive the highest professional advice that can be laid before it, and should such a contingency arise as was alluded to by the hon. Member for Dundee—should there be a conflict of opinion between the professional and the civilian element—then there will be the whole Cabinet to fall back upon in order to decide which of the views is right. So that now there is a thoroughly Constitutional and effective safeguard in that particular way, and I think it will meet all requirements. I will conclude by saying that I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon having introduced this scheme. I think it is one which will work for the advantage of the nation, and I am quite sure that all thinking soldiers will congratulate him upon having introduced a measure which promises so much good.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester): I have only a few words to urge, and they are entirely from the point of view of the tax-payer. I heard the elaboration of the scheme in the splendid form which the Prime Minister gave it with much pain and concern for the future. I read in between the lines, which were left so wide apart, increased expenditure of millions of money as the probable outcome of the formation of this Defence Committee. We are all desirous that whatever defensive forces we have should be so composed and organised that they should be ready to work in harmony with each other at the shortest possible notice, and with the greatest effect in the interests of the country. But surely that might be accomplished without the appointing of this additional Department of Government, because it is sure to become a Department. To multiply the authorities as you are now going to do does not necessarily mean that you will have increased efficiency and increased safeguards for the objects you aim at in the appointing of this Committee. You are going to have a number of military men and a number of naval men, with a certain number of the Cabinet, joined together as a sort of extra Cabinet, and if these naval and military forces are to be of service you will in the main be ruled and guided and advised by the fighting forces as to any increased necessity for expenditure to make those forces more effective than they are. A man naturally is interested in increasing the cost of the Navy if he is a naval man, and he would be a very poor sailor if he did not take great pride in that branch of the service; and the same can be said of the Army part of the service. A man would be a very poor soldier if he did not take pride in the Army, and therefore these two great military forces will naturally always be advocating increased expenditure for their respective Departments. Consequently, if they are continually recommending increased developments of the Navy and Army, this House will be almost powerless to resist proposals made by a Cabinet backed by so great an authority as this Committee.

I hope this Committee will not be appointed unanimously, because I believe that it will only increase our military expenditure, and from what we know of the Departments already in existence, I am afraid we shall get but a poor, and probably an altogether inadequate, return of safety in proportion to the enormous cost that will be incurred. This is a momentous day. This Committee will be one of universal interest throughout Europe and America. Its consultations, deliberations, and decisions will be objects desired by every Governments in Europe. You will, for the first time in your history, create a Department which will be besieged by foreign spies looking for chance copy which will probably be transmitted throughout Europe. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No, no."] This information will probably be conveyed to Governments chiefly opposed to us, and even if the reports conveyed are false, they will cause a state of unrest which will produce increased armaments abroad. The moment armaments increase abroad they increase at home, and so you go on with a beggar-my-neighbour policy until the whole of Europe is taxed out of existence by this fanciful expenditure in preparation for an European war.

We all knew or suspected that there was no minute book kept at Cabinet meetings. If I understand aright the Prime Minister suggested that this joint Committee are to keep records in minute books, which are to be handed on from generation to generation of Cabinets. You will want almost an Army Corps to protect the secrecy of these records of the Committee. That itself will be a national danger. The very object of the appointment of a National Committee of Defence is to secure national safety. These priceless archives which are to be created by the Committee will be besieged by all the nations of the world, in order that they may get copies of them. There may be reasons for the handing on from Government to Government of the general plans that have been discussed, but I sincerely hope that if you have your Committee you will find the means of carrying on its work without preserving in this substantial way every detail of the discussion and the reasons why the decisions were arrived at.

When I said that this was a momentous day, I was speaking entirely from the taxpayers' point of view. The Prime Minister made a statement during Question time in reply to a Question of my hon. friend the Member for Great Yarmouth which will no doubt have been flashed throughout the world. He stated that we are going to create a great naval base on the East Coast; I am not saying that you should not. The Government, and others besides the Government, have thought for some time past that that part of the country has not been in the state of preparation that it might be for certain eventualities. On that we are all agreed, but you have made the announcement of a great naval base in the northern part of Great Britain, from which you are going to be able in a few years to issue forth a great and mighty fleet, while it is also to serve as a harbour of refuge for your fighting vessels in time of war. What will the Jingoes of Germany, France, and Russia, say? Germany will undoubtedly make counter moves in the same direction, and for the same purpose. A Conservative Government, a few years ago, surrendered Heligoland to Germany. I am not at all sure that this northern base would have been so necessary now as it is but for the surrender of that island. It was a haven for our fleet, our fishing vessels, and general merchant ships. A naval home in the North will mean an additional permanent expenditure of probably more than £2,000,000 a year. There are a few Members in the House who have not swallowed this proposal without consideration, and I am warning them as to what is to follow. You can laugh and dance until the feast is over, and then comes the reckoning and you laugh no more. The expense of this new naval base will be enormous.

I believe that the First Lord of the Treasury could easily, if he liked—he is clever enough for it if he had applied his mind to it—have insisted upon his subordinates connected with the two services devising a scheme whereby greater unity, effectiveness and co-operation between the two branches could have been brought about without the creation of this new Department. I know that the Prime Minister has only made a very general demand which has been continuously reiterated in this House for two or three years past. I always hoped that he would resist the demand which, in a weaker moment, he has surrendered to, and here we are now launching ourselves forth in all the glory of our Jingo raiment with a great and powerful Committee, so that we shall be ready at any moment to hurl the British Army here, there, and everywhere, and send the Navy to sweep all the seas of the world. All I have to say to-day is that those who accept these proposals must consequently accept full responsibility, not only for the initial cost of the proposals, but for the permanently increased burden which they will involve to this country. The expenditure to-day on the two branches of the service amounts in the aggregate to about £60,000,000—a sum which thirty years ago represented your entire revenues. You have a great deal more than doubled your expenditure on the Navy and the Army combined.

If all that is foreshadowed in this Resolution is agreed to by the House and carried into effect, together with the increased expenditure for a naval base on the East Coast, we shall in all probability add permanently to the expenditure of the country at least ten millions a year. I am second to none in my desire to see the interests of the country efficiently and effectively safeguarded both by land and by water, but I fear that this additional authority, this further division of responsibility, this delegation of the duties of the Cabinet, which is the proper Defence Committee, will certainly mean an increase of expenditure without any adequate increase in the efficiency of the Army and Navy. Unless I hear before the debate closes some better defence of the proposal, or some assurance from the Government that this is not going to lead to an enormous increase of expenditure, I am afraid that I shall have to take a division against the Motion on financial grounds in order to test the feeling of the House as to the proposed policy, which at present appears to be wild and extravagant.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: If the hon. Member who has just spoken had studied the suggestion made by the First Lord of the Treasury — for it is only a suggestion—he would have been satisfied that there is no immediate expenditure involved at all; and as to what it will ultimately involve, that is entirely another matter. The hon. Member spoke as if this were to be a new Department. It is nothing of the sort. There are eight members—four of them members of the Cabinet, and four of them special Members already in the services. They are existing functionaries, who are formed into this Committee to meet together and consult. I should strongly object to the formation of a new Department, because a Department of this description might obtain too much power and become a great danger. That is my objection to the formation of anything corresponding to the German General Staff. That would be a new departure and a costly one. But this is a different thing. Those who have considered the tremendous problems involved in military and naval defence—the problems of defence connected with the co-ordination of the two forces according to the needs of the Empire — must rejoice that for once in its existence the House of Commons has had the opportunity of discussing these matters to-day and deliberating upon the suggested Committee of Defence put before it by my right hon. friend. I am not only very glad that we have had this scheme put before us, but also because of the tone in which my right hon. friend spoke in putting it forward. He has put forward an abstract proposition which affirms the desirability of permanency, and he has also in the course of the debate stated that while the new Defence Committee exists, it exists only in an experimental and tentative form.

It has been provisionally determined; it is experimental and tentative so far. Consequently, taking that and the terms of the Resolution into account, it is quite manifest that what my right hon. friend desires is, if I may say so, to take the House into his confidence and invite it to make some suggestions for the further improvement of the Committee. As one who has given a great deal of thought for many years to this subject, I wish to offer a few reflections on the scheme, and to make a few practical suggestions. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition asked: "What is the need of this Committee? You have your military and naval advisers, and you can consult them. It is a thing which has never yet existed." I am surprised that the right hon. Gentleman should have asked such a question. He must be well aware that all those who have considered the great strategic problem connected with the defence of this Empire, and the great importance of determining the relative proportions of the Army and the Navy and their functions, have seen the necessity for having something, not in the nature of the German general staff, but a body which is in the position to have all the information before it and to co-ordinate the duties of the two forces. That is what is wanted, and I am the more surprised at the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman, because it was in the right hon. Gentleman's own Government that the idea of a Cabinet Defence Committee was first started.

The root idea is that we should have some body outside the highest military and naval authorities which will be able to take a whole world-wide scope of the political and strategic situation and consider what the relative naval and military forces should be and where they should be placed. Well, there was the Committee of Defence, but I have always supposed that that was an impossible body to advise the Cabinet, or to tell the Cabinet what it did not know already, or to persuade it to do that which it was not already persuaded to accomplish. For it was nothing more than a few members of the Cabinet itself. It was said by the present Secretary to the Admiralty that the Cabinet Committee of Defence was a huge joke and a grotesque imposture. I do not think that the picture was overdrawn. How huge the joke was, and how grotesque the imposture, is shown by certain examples which the House may have in its memory. Take the Mediterranean. Since this Cabinet Committee of Defence has been in existence it has allowed things to take place in the Mediterranean which have tremendously altered and impaired the position of our power in that sea. We have Egypt to look after, and we must find a considerable Army of occupation for it. But that Army of occupation necessitates our naval presence there, which tends to divide our Mediterranean fleet. Under these circumstances what has occurred? We have seen tremendous questions raised in Tripoli and in Morocco. France is even now massing troops on the western frontier of Algeria towards Morocco. In addition to that, there is the most startling development of Russian power in the Mediterranean. The Black Sea has now become one vast Russian arsenal. It became so from the moment she was allowed to pass her warships unchallenged through the Dardanelles. It is true that they go without their guns mounted, but there is no difficulty about their getting through, and once passed in or out they may be armed on the other side, or they may come out with their guns in their holds. That makes the Black Sea one huge Russian arsenal in which navies may be prepared unwatched and unhindered, and whence they may issue unchecked. The Cabinet Committee has seen that prepared and has allowed it to take place.

Then this grand Committee of Defence has allowed that monstrous waste of £5,000,000 of public money on the western side of Gibraltar, although the Cabinet knew well that it was impossible to make the new works there safe or tenable, and that to make them tenable they would require to provide another Army Corps. All this has gone on during the existence of the Cabinet Defence Committee! It has also allowed a most vital and important maritime right hitherto enjoyed by this country to be given up. I allude to the right of search of mail steamers during a state of war. That right was given up to Germany during the Boer War, and it follows that you have given it up to the whole world. That is a matter most essential to the interests of the Empire, and my opinion is that, if there had been an adequate Committee of Defence, the surrender of that right could not have been made.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs): It has not been given up.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Undoubtedly it has. What occurred was this: we had the right in war to stop neutral ships when we had reason to believe that they were carrying on board contraband of war. On that ground we stopped two or three steamers. But remonstrances were made by Germany. At that moment we had the "Herzog," a vessel which was notoriously chokefull of contraband of war; but, on the remonstrance of Germany, Lord Salisbury peremptorily instructed Lord Goschen to give orders for the release of the ship. As a consequence of the communications with and something like menace by Germany, we finally agreed that we would not search any ship nearer to Delagoa Bay than Aden, and that no German mail ship should be searched at all. That right having been surrendered to Germany, it would be impossible to deny the surrender of it to any other power. That surrender, I am convinced, would not have taken place if we had had a properly constituted Committee of Defence. It is time therefore that some new body, more competent, more capable, and of greater working power, should be set up. I think there are some very serious defects in the scheme as presented by the First Lord of the Treasury, and I respectfully submit that certain improvements are capable of being made in it. Let me magnify the functions of this Committee. There has never been a time in the history of this country or of the world when problems so complex, so wide-spread, and so far-reaching have arisen. They are those with which this Committee of Defence will have to deal. Our territories and our responsibilities are world-wide, our frontiers by land and by sea in all four quarters of the globe. We have indeed only a small land frontier in Europe, but in Asia we have a most extended and important landfrontier. In America we have a land frontier of great length, regarding which the most delicate and difficult questions may arise, which it is only possible for such a Committee to consider thoroughly, if it is a really adequate and competent body; and in Africa we have also extensive land frontiers. Then we have our sea frontier, and to my mind that frontier is wherever the five-fathom line touches a foreign coast. But if this Defence Committee is to be a competent body, every day and all day long it must have the whole map of the world before its eyes, and in its mind all the changes which are making or have been made in the frontiers of all the Powers. No such problems, none so wide and varied as these, were ever before presented to the statesman or the strategist. Nor Napoleon nor Moltke, neither Xerxes nor Alexander had such things to deal with on such a theatre. And to deal with them demands the best of the life of the best of the men we have, and the whole of their time. Seeking to form a body with such functions to perform, which will decide on the whole destinies of the Empire, we cannot safely entrust its duties to amateurs or *dilettanti*, or even to Ministers occupied with the affairs of their own Departments, nor to the Commander-in-Chief or Intelligence officers whose whole time is occupied with their particular duties. We should commit it to a permanent outside body having no other business. We should, in my opinion, commit it to a permanent Royal Commission—a consultative Commission with full powers of acquiring information, but subject to the Cabinet. But on this I will not now enlarge. There is another point, perhaps the most important of all, to which such a Committee as this should direct their attention.

It is said that the proportions of the Army and Navy, and the work of the Army and Navy, are to some extent co-ordinated in the mind of the Commander-in-Chief and First Naval Lord, but it is a one-sided consideration, and there never come before them political considerations which are of the most intense importance. The Committee of Defence, such as I hope this one will develop itself to be, has the most tremendous political problems to consider. Let the House remember our treaty engagements. Our treaties and guarantees cover the whole world. They extend to Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Sweden, Turkey, Portugal, Greece, Muscat, and China. At any time, and in the most unexpected way, any one of these guarantees may force us, for the honour of our flag, to go to war, and that must be constantly in the mind of the Committee. Again, there are other equally serious political trammels. Take the Declaration of Paris, by which this country has undertaken that we will not seize our enemy's goods carried in neutral bottoms. That has been denounced by everybody, by Lord Derby, Lord Beaconsfield, and Lord Roberts, who said that it struck at the root of our naval power. If Lord Roberts is to be a member of the Defence Committee, I hope his opinion will be considered. It is precisely these matters, which have never been considered before, which this Committee will have to discuss, and upon which they will have to come to a decision. Lord Salisbury himself said this of the Declaration of Paris—

> "I believe that the fleet, admirable as it is for preventing the invasion of these shores, is, since the Declaration of Paris, almost valueless for any other purpose."

And Lord Salisbury gives specific grounds for his belief. These grounds will have to be examined, and in the event of the Committee coming to the conclusion that these grounds are serious, it will be their duty to submit them to the consideration of the Cabinet.

I venture to lay down certain conditions which ought to obtain in any Committee or Council of Defence. My first point is that it should be permanent. And here I would remark that to my mind one very serious objection to the plan now suggested is that there is no evidence that permanency is now proposed. There are to be on the proposed Committee four Cabinet Ministers who we know are not permanent. There are the Commander-in-Chief, the First Naval Lord of the Admiralty, and the Military and Naval Intelligence Officers. I believe I am right in saying that although there is no absolute rule to that effect, it is the rarest thing in the world for either of these four officers to hold office for more than five years, and if this be the ordinary allowance of time for these officers it is a generous allowance for a Cabinet Minister. Consequently there is not there the element of permanency. I say you must have permanency or you have nothing adequate. I say that the members of the Committee must live with their important functions; they must think of them, take them home with them, sleep with them, dream of them, and never lose hold of them. A Defence Committee that sleeps or slumbers or folds its hands or gives only an intermittent attention must be inadequate. My second point is that it is absolutely necessary to keep consecutive records and to preserve them for the next Government. And the records must be kept by the Committee itself. Now then who is going to draw up and to have charge of the records? Is one of these eight men to keep the records, and is it possible that any one of them can be a proper archivist? Every report will be of the most intense importance. An hon. Member opposite suggested that these reports will be the object of espionage and bribery on the part of every other Power in the world; but without going to that length, they will undoubtedly be some of the most important records of the Empire, and their guardian should be a very important person and an altogether permanent person. Consequently, one of the suggestions I should make is that such a functionary as I name—an archivist—should be permanently appointed for life, with a salary adequate to the importance of his position. He would be a sort of Master of the Rolls, would be the custodian of the records, and would himself be invaluable to the Committee as embodying in his memory a record of the proceedings. Then, in my belief, it is essential that the Committee should have as one of its standing members, with at least a consultative voice, a competent international lawyer, and I am not sure he might not be one and the same person as the guardian of the records whom I have called the archivist. For the Committee will be confronted at every turn by questions of the Law of Nations, which it must determine before it can proceed further. My third point is that the Committee must have the fullest access to all sources of information; and should be able to call before it the Permanent Secretary or the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, or the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, and all documents should be open to it.

Perhaps the House will allow me to say that when I lay down conditions which I think to be essential, I am to some extent assisted by the fact that I myself have been a member of this very kind of Committee. Our Gibraltar

Committee was this very kind of Committee. We had to consider political considerations, then military considerations, and, finally naval considerations, and we had to co-ordinate the whole. There should, therefore, be most complete records—though there are, of course, certain details which need not be recorded—and a full account should be kept. But if you do not provide an archivist who is to make the record? You cannot bring a casual shorthand writer in and let him take the proceedings down and then go away. Then there is another matter to which I attach very great importance indeed. The House knows that a large part of the value of discussions in this House arises from the fact that in this House every Member is equal. There is no inequality as between members, and the result is that sometimes an entirely unsuspected Member gives the House information and suggestions of a most valuable character.

My fourth point, then, is that equality must also exist in a Committee of this sort if it is to be a Committee of intelligence, of ideas, and above all of suggestion. It must be a Committee that has imagination, that can let its mind roam over the various portions of the Empire, and it must have its mind free for conception of plans, methods, devices. To that end it is absolutely necessary that its members should be on an equality. There again I see a defect. You are going to have on this Committee the First Naval Lord and his subordinate the Naval Intelligence Officer. An Intelligence Officer does not dare to call his soul his own before a First Naval Lord. Then again there will be the Commander-in-Chief and his Intelligence Officer, and above these will be the four tremendous members of the Cabinet, to join in debate and in an overpowering body to discuss matters with these gentlemen, their inferiors and subordinates. The whole thing will be unequal. At one end you will have inferior persons who will not be fitted to give their whole mind and imagination—which is most valuable—to this Committee; and they will be under a feeling of oppression by the presence of these superior persons. My fifth point is that among the things necessary there must be, of course, absolute secrecy. No word must transpire anywhere, not even in this House, and of course precautions will have to be taken as to that, precautions which can only be adequately furnished by giving the Committee itself charge of its own records. Finally, my sixth point is that any decision that may be taken must not be anything but of an advisory character. It would be most improper and dangerous in any way to fetter the discretion and responsibility of the Cabinet. The Cabinet must be responsible for all great measures that may be taken.

I lay down these conditions, and I think them essential; and I will tell the House frankly that in my opinion these conditions are to be obtained not by a Committee as suggested but only by the establishment of a permanent, paid Royal Commission who will make it the business of their lives, and who would give up all else and think of and live for this alone. That would not be too much to ask. I would make the Commissioners four in number, and I would charge their salaries on the Consolidated Fund. I would provide them with an archivist, and would charge his salary on the Consolidated Fund, in order, as I frankly admit, to prevent any of the acts of the Commission, which must be wholly secret, from being discussed even in this House. I am not now going to enter upon that proposed Royal Commission, which I believe to be the proper form of this body, as I only desire to make some practical suggestions with regard to the Committee as actually now proposed. The First Lord of the Treasury has said that he holds it to be important that there should be a strong Cabinet element on the Committee. I, on the contrary, believe it is important that there should be no such Cabinet element on it. I see no necessity for it. Why are the Secretary of State for War and the First Lord of the Admiralty to be members? Where is the need? Every military suggestion of the Committee must first come before the Secretary of State for War, and every naval suggestion must come before the First Lord of the Admiralty, for his decision; and then his decision must at last come before the Cabinet. Therefore, I do not think it desirable that there should be a strong Cabinet element. What I do think desirable and indispensable is that the First Lord of the Treasury should have unchallenged access to this Committee, and that he should be an *ex-officio* member of it as First Lord of the Treasury. For he is the Prime Minister, the leader and master of the Cabinet, and, nothing should be kept from him. I notice what seems to be some uncertainty as to the composition of the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury said that the present President of the Council was to be a member, but he suggested that not every other President of the Council was to be a member. I should have supposed that once you attach membership to an office, the holder of that office would necessarily succeed his predecessor as a member of the Committee.

I venture to make these few suggestions because, in my view, the matter is one of the most intense importance. When we are replacing a worn-out, useless and grotesque imposture by a new body we should take the greatest pains to make it fit to carry on its duties, otherwise we may create, not a new security, but a new danger for the Empire. I make these suggestions in no spirit of hostility, but in a spirit of friendliness to the scheme. I trust they will be considered, as I believe they will; and that in the end the country may be endowed with a body capable of discharging the tremendous duties which will devolve on it, duties greater than and incomparable with those imposed on any other Government or any other country. No leaders of any nation ever yet had to consider problems such as we have to deal with. They are increasing day by day in complexity and in vital importance, and I trust the outcome of this deliberation may be that such a body may be constituted as may safely be entrusted with the tremendous destinies with which it will have to deal.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): The hon. Member began his remarks by saying that he thoroughly approved of the scheme laid before the House by the First Lord of the Treasury, and then he immediately proceeded to pick the scheme to pieces. It is unquestionably true that no provision has been made for keeping records, but I cannot agree with the proposal of the hon. Gentleman that there should be set up a permanent paid Royal Commission with an archivist and all the rest of it. After all there have been very important decisions of the Admiralty and the War Office which are kept secret from the public, but which are available to officers in the Navy and Army; and, therefore, although there may be inconvenience and a certain lack of regularity and arrangement in the provisions suggested by the First Lord of the Treasury, I do not share that escape of knowledge which seems to haunt the hon. Member for King's Lynn.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: What I fear is that there is no provision for keeping the knowledge. I do not suggest that it would escape, but I see no provision for keeping it.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: I hope the Government will not set up an archivist, because it seems to me that these records could be best kept as documents have been kept in the past, in duplicate, one at the War Office and the other at the Admiralty. [AN HON. MEMBER: Who is to keep them?] Who keeps the records at the present moment at the Admiralty and the War Office? No special officer is told off to keep them. If a special officer is to be appointed to keep the records of the Committee, the fear expressed by my hon. friend the Member for Leicester is not so ill-placed or far distant as hon. Members seem to think—viz., that the Committee might develop into a Department, gradually accumulating to itself very considerable spending powers. If we set up an archivist, as the hon. Member suggested, we are not very far from the expensive Department foreshadowed by my hon. friend the Member for Leicester. What I think has escaped the notice of the House is that this proposal is by no means a new one. Similar proposals have been made before, and it is very curious to notice that so great has been the change in public opinion that a proposal which then met, so far as I can trace it, with very little notice, and very little approbation from the public at large has been to-day received unanimously on both sides of the House. That shows a very great change in public opinion, but it none the less shows a very significant growth of public opinion on this question.

Then there is the question of permanence. It is quite true Commanders-in-Chief and Secretaries of State disappear at the end of five years, but so far as I can make out the terms of office of those gentlemen overlap, and, therefore, it is improbable that four of the Committee will go out together, and still more improbable that the other four will go at the same time. I think that has escaped the notice of hon. Gentlemen who have noticed this part of the Committee's working, and it gives a greater value to it than it would otherwise possess. The only pity is that this Committee was not set up before the present Estimates were set up in this House. It has not been mentioned, but it is the fact that the Army Estimates this year are no less than £31,500,000, which is an increase of £2,500,000 on the normal Army Estimates. If those Estimates could have been submitted to a really responsible Committee I venture to think that a great part of that increase would not have been presented to the country, but by some means or other that increased expenditure would have been eliminated. It would be out of order to discuss those Estimates now, but that points to the uselessness of the old Cabinet Defence Committee. And speaking of that I should like to know if the Colonial Defence Committee has ceased to exist. That was a most important body, comprised of the War Office, the Colonial Office, the Admiralty, and the Foreign Office, which drew up a detailed, clear, and specific plan for the defence of the colonies. Their records were kept, and they laid down a systematic plan for the defence of the country. That Committee attracted no attention, because it was practically unknown, but I should like to know whether it exists at the present moment; whether any part of these Estimates have come under their notice; whether they have made any recommendations with regard to them; and whether the new system, now being set up in continuation of the old, will have any influence on the Estimates of this country more than the old Defence Committee have had. Because if we are to judge of the future by the past I very much doubt whether this Council will have that chastening influence on the Estimates which we hope they will have.

There is one other point which I should like to touch. The hon. Member for King's Lynn seemed to think this Committee ought to have its whole time taken up in considering questions of military and naval defence. I do not think that ought to be the conception of the duties of a Committee of this sort. The information will be collected by the naval and military Intelligence Departments and that information ought to be full, sufficient, and final. The deliberations of this Committee ought not to extend to obtaining new matter but rather adapting and considering the matter already submitted to them by the Intelligence Departments. If that is the true conception of the duties of this Committee it is quite clear they need not meet more than occasionally, and need not have their whole time taken up by the consideration of schemes of defence; but they will rather, if fresh information is presented to them from time to time, be able with the assistance of their political *confrères* to take into consideration the whole scheme of defence as a whole. I think I need not detain the House longer. All I have to say is that if this arrangement is to be of any real use the officers who compose it must be entirely free from the influence of their superior officers. You will have inferior officers sitting side by side with their superior officers, and unless the directors of military intelligence, both Navy and Army, are kept entirely free from the Executive of the Army and Navy, as they are in every country but this, they will be useless members of this body. If they are kept free from the Executive they will have at their disposal useful, nay indispensable, information, which no other member of the Committee can have. If that plan is adopted, this Committee will be a success; if it is not, it will be a failure.

*MAJOR EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I hope if I make a few suggestions they will not be taken as captious criticism by the right hon. Gentleman who proposed this Motion. I see for my part one very serious objection to the constitution of this Committee. It may, I fear, be taken as a substitute for what, in my opinion, is essential, that is to say, a great general staff for the Army. The hon. Member who has just sat down referred to the origin of this Committee of Defence. It was a suggestion thrown out by the Hartington Commission, but that Commission only said it might be advantageous that such a Committee should be constituted. But the main suggestion of the Hartington Commission was, that a general staff of the Army should be created. That was the main recommendation. The Cabinet Committee of Defence was only a suggestion which went hand in hand with the larger proposal. It is only the minor suggestion that has been adopted. The main recommendation has been ignored. The hon. Member for King's Lynn has pointed out the enormous complexity of the questions which must come under the purview of the Defence Committee, and I submit it is quite impossible that these great and complex questions can ever be fully and properly considered by such a body. The work described should be the lifework of those concerned in it; they should devote their whole time to the consideration of the problems with which they have to deal; and I do not believe that Cabinet Ministers and officials already overloaded with other responsible duties, can possibly find the time in which to give the requisite attention to these great matters. The Hartington Commission was emphatic on this point, and I cannot understand why its recommendations as to a Chief of the Staff presiding over a special Department have never been adopted.

The recent debate on the Army Estimates seemed to me to show considerable confusion in the minds of hon. Members as to the difference between the Intelligence Department and a General Staff. The collection of information is one thing, but its digestion and assimilation is quite another. My contention, and the contention of the Hartington Commission is, that the information when collected should be submitted to a Department, which upon that information should found its plans and base its requirements. Until this is done, and until a general staff is constituted composed of experts both of the Army and the Navy, I do not believe there is any great hope of these plans and requirements being worked out. The Committee of Defence will certainly not fulfil these objects. What its past has been we all know; we cannot tell what its future will be. We can only hope. Looking at its past history we know it has never fulfilled what was expected of it when it was constituted. The intention of the Hartington Commission was to place the control and guidance of the whole war power of the country in the hands of a Committee of the Cabinet, presided over by the Lord President of the Council. In 1895 we find the present Secretary of State for War, then in opposition, closely criticising the Council and asking whether records had been kept, as was suggested by the Hartington Commission. In 1896 the same right hon. Gentleman, then in office, told the House that the Council had been turned into a reality. So that upon the right hon. Gentleman's authority until then, at all events, it had been a sham. Since 1896, although the Secretary of State for War has had control, no records have been kept, and the very steps which he himself considered necessary in 1895 have not been taken. It seems to me that whenever the military policy of this country is seriously criticised, this Committee of National Defence is produced, like Seigel's Syrup, as a panacea for all ills. I feel sure that in addition to this Committee a Department of general staff for the Army should be created, and that this step is an essential feature in any real measure of Army Reform.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): This matter does not raise any questions in the domain of Party, and I can assure the Prime Minister that if my right hon. friend and others amongst us desired to have a fuller opportunity of discussion, it was not because we underrated the importance of this proposal, but rather because we thought there ought to be ample time for reflection and consideration of the question in all its bearings before the House expressed any opinion upon it. There are unquestionably some good points in the scheme, and they have been very generally recognised on both sides of the House. It is a real advantage that there should be a formal and definite method provided by which the authorities of the Army and of the Navy—both the Minister responsible and the permanent official—should constantly be brought into contact for the purpose of settling a general scheme of defence. The problem before us is an excessively complicated problem, branching out into many directions, each having aspects of its own. For instance, the problem of the North-West Frontier of India is entirely distinct and unique; it cannot be considered to have a parallel in any part of the Empire. But all the greater is the reason for looking upon the question as one for endeavouring to bring all the concentrated forces of naval, military, and diplomatic knowledge to bear. Diplomatic knowledge must be recognised in this matter. All defence is largely a question of policy.

I should have felt much disappointed if we had not had from the First Lord of the Treasury an assurance that the Foreign Secretary would be, at least on many occasions, a member of this Committee. I do not think that a decision with regard to defence, particularly in the case of the North-West Frontier of India, could possibly be arrived at without the presence and counsel of the Secretary of State for India, and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. It is also a great advantage that the representatives of the Army and the Navy should be brought face to face with the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that both those Ministers—the one in his function of generally overlooking the whole policy of the Government, and the other as responsible for finance—should be directly confronted with those who make the demands for military and naval expenditure. Many troubles might have been avoided in the past if, instead of being at arm's-length, they had been constantly in contact, and if the skilled advisers had been brought into direct contact with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, instead of their views merely filtering through the responsible Minister. So far, therefore, I think there are real advantages in the scheme, and I should be the last person to deny the possibilities which the scheme in these respects holds out. I think, too, it has this advantage: that the fact that the country has an assurance that continued and steady attention will be given to these problems may do something to avert panic such as we have from time to time suffered from. I am old enough to remember the panic of 1859–1860, and we all remember that there was a similar panic a few years ago. If we know that there is be an authority of this kind, meeting not only at moments of Imperial danger, but regularly, it will go far to reassure the country. At the same time, I think that this debate has disclosed on the part of many Members an expectation of more results from this Committee than can reasonably be expected from any Committee. The hon. Member for King's Lynn referred to several points in regard to which he thought errors had been committed. But those errors are just as likely to be committed by this Committee. There are many problems in this world which are not solved by Committees or Royal Commissions, and upon which the best and wisest men would differ, and their decisions shown by the future to be wrong. Nothing more could be done than to provide the best possible opportunity for discussion, and I think this Committee will at any rate afford a better prospect than we have hitherto had of all these things being thoroughly discussed.

As regards finance, I cannot agree with my hon. friend the Member for Leicester, that this Committee will necessarily involve increased expenditure; neither do I feel sure that it will lead to a reduction of expenditure. But it ought to lead to a reduction, because it should ensure expenditure in one direction being considered in reference to expenditure in another, although such matters of expenditure do not necessarily depend on one another. It does not follow because we spend more on the Army that we should spend less on the Navy, but it seems to me that the more we take a wide view of the problem, the better chance there is that it will be dealt with in an economical spirit. These things do not depend upon machinery, but upon the temper of the country and the men elected to Parliament. No machinery can go very far.

Premising that I am not desirous of criticising the scheme in a hostile spirit, let me advert to a few possible drawbacks, or, at any rate, risks, which seem to be involved. One relates to the question of keeping records. I suppose the Prime Minister will keep the record.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It will be kept at the Foreign Office.

MR. BRYCE: By some Foreign Office official, I suppose. That, to some extent, meets my point. Passing by that, therefore, I come to the question of the permanent element, consisting of the Commander-in-Chief, the First Sea Lord, and the respective heads of the two Intelligence Departments. It is a real difficulty that the heads of the Intelligence Departments are subordinate officers, because sentiment and tradition are so strong in the two services that it is not easy to induce a subordinate to express an opinion different from that of his chief. I cannot help feeling that these heads of the Intelligence Department, being subordinate officers, may be governed by that sentiment and tradition, and not exercise a sufficiently independent judgment. I should have thought that instead of making them members of the Committee it would have been better to put them in the position of assessors—that is to say, of persons who are not members but who are called in to sit with the Committee; not being asked to give a vote, if it comes to a vote, but simply to communicate facts and answer questions. In that position they might have been sufficiently free to express an opinion, whereas they would not feel free to vote against their chief. I really think it would have been better, both for them and for the work of the Committee, if they had been put on a different basis from the other members. Any system under which you associate permanent officials with members of the Cabinet is to some extent a departure from, or an infringement of, your Cabinet system. The system of Cabinet responsibility in this country is a very peculiar system, and I do not think you can put persons outside the Cabinet on the same footing as persons inside without more or less weakening the Cabinet system. It must be borne in mind that these eminent officials are specialists. They are not accustomed to look upon these questions as a matter of general policy, or to keep their finger on the pulse of the country, or to watch foreign policy, or to deal with financial questions, or to know how much the country can spend in the way of taxation, or how much the House of Commons will accept. They are, therefore, really not in the same position for expressing an opinion upon these questions as are members of the Cabinet. Then they have a natural tendency, as all specialists have, to magnify the importance of their own Department, and to think that their first duty is to make every possible demand on the part of their Department. Professional opinion expects to ask not for what is necessary, or even what is desirable, but for all that the most advanced professional opinion wishes. A man in the position of the Commander-in-Chief or the first Sea Lord is necessarily influenced by professional opinion, and it is very hard for him to bring himself into the same position in considering these matters as a member of the Cabinet.

I do not say that these are insuperable difficulties, but they ought to be borne in mind as being drawbacks, necessarily incidental to the scheme of putting permanent specialists on the same footing as members of the Cabinet. After all the decision must rest with the Cabinet. The Cabinet must not suppose that the existence of this Committee is to lessen the responsibility of individual members of the Cabinet. Every member of the Cabinet ought to consider himself responsible for everything done by that Committee. It would be a great misfortune to our system of Government if the existence of this Committee led members of the Cabinet to acquiesce in what the Committee had decided merely because it had so decided. The particular proposition laid before us is really one which might have been carried into effect by the Government without coming to the House of Commons at all. I hardly understand, except it be for the purpose of giving us a peg on which to hang a debate, why the House of Commons should have been asked to express an opinion. What was done before was done by the Government, and what is being done now could be done by the Government; it does not require a Minute; it requires only a resolution of the Cabinet for certain members to meet these permanent officials in consultation.

I should like to remark on a peculiarity of the Motion. The Motion is that the growing needs of the Empire require the establishment of "the" Committee of Defence on a permanent footing. Is any Committee of Defence, in the sense of a Committee of Defence, known to this House? It certainly is not known to law. This seems to me to be a recognition by a side wind in a manner which is rather novel, and I should have thought that the object of the Government would have been well met by saying "a" instead of "the" Committee of Defence.

The House will have gathered from what I have said that we on this side do not object to the Motion, and that we do not propose to challenge the opinion of the House upon it. The Government put it forward as a tentative and experimental proposal, and it is in that sense that we do not object to it. It is perfectly right that experiments should be tried in this way, and that if the experience of the last seven years has convinced the Government that the form in which this Committee has hitherto existed is not satisfactory they should be allowed to try another form. But at the same time I am sure it will be understood that in not objecting to the action the Government propose to take, we are not committing ourselves to this proposal in any permanent form; we are only agreeing that it is an experiment which they may fairly try.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): I do not share the view of the hon. Member for Leicester that this will lead to greatly increased expenditure. I think that co-ordination and common-sense in the Committee of Defence is likely to reduce rather than increase expenditure. I was not at all surprised to hear the speech made by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, because on the Hartington Commission thirty years ago he opposed the formation of a general staff, and I think that this proposal of the First Lord of the Treasury is something in the nature of a general staff. The right hon. Gentleman opposite opposed the proposal then on the ground that a General ought to know what he had got to do when he arrives on the ground, and that a general staff would make this country more bellicose and warlike than before. I think certain unofficial bodies in this House, who have shown an intelligent interest in events before they happen, ought to receive some credit for the Resolution proposed to-day, because as long ago as last session they tabled an Amendment to the Address intending to move it this session, which Amendment has been practically taken up and adopted in the Resolution to-day. Of course the necessity for a reconstruction of the Committee of Defence has been absolutely evident to everybody—at any rate since the events of the last few years. Nobody knew how to fix the responsibility on those who were responsible for the Fleet, which Lord Charles Beresford told us had practically to be refitted and strongly increased in 1901. Those two memoranda which had been alluded to, one coming from the War Office and the other from the Admiralty at the time of the Conference of Colonial Premiers, each pointing in opposite directions, showed the necessity for some such proposal as this. As far as the old Committee of Defence went perhaps I may say that nobody as far as I know could understand its *raison d'être.* Apparently it seldom met; it took no minutes; had no records; could spend no money; gave no account of itself; and the only thing we knew about it was that the Duke of Devonshire was chairman. Surely it was time such an organisation made way for something else. I cannot understand why it lasted so long, and I am glad it has been got rid of. I beg to thank the First Lord of the Treasury for what he has done in this matter.

*MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I rise to support the proposal which has been put before the House, subject to certain information which may come to hand as to the precise constitution and mode of action of the Committee. As far as the principle is concerned an instrument is now produced which is to secure greater co-ordination between the operations of the Army and those of the Navy. That seems an object deserving of praise, but it will depend for its success upon the manner in which it is administered. The cardinal factor affecting the safety of the British Empire is that, apart from the Indian frontier, there is no part of the world in which we should be likely to clash with other Powers, where our Army and Navy would not require to co-operate. It appears to me to be absolutely essential that some arrangement should be arrived at by which the two forces can be directed from one and the same head. The hon. and gallant Member who sits for Stepney expressed some apprehension that the creation of this Committee might retard the constitution of a chief of the staff for both the Army and the Navy. There appears to be no actual reason why the constitution of this Committee should produce any such effect. On the contrary ought it not to accelerate some consummation of that kind? If you have a Committee consisting partly of members of the Cabinet, and partly of the great officers of the Army and the Navy, you will be able to bring to bear such influence as will lead to the most speedy creation of a Staff, whether it be a General Staff or a Chief with certain advisers, which can direct from one source the operations of both forces. Not only will that be the case, but the creation of a Ministry of this kind may also accelerate another process for which opinion is not at the present time ready, and it would probably be regarded as a very dangerous proposal in some quarters —I allude to the abolition of the Admiralty and the War Office as separate Departments, and their reconstitution as a Ministry of Imperial Defence. It seems to me that the tendency is to bring about more co-operation between the two classes of the Service. The establishment of a Committee of this kind and the formation of a general staff, and the ultimate amalgamation of the two offices into one, are distinct signs that there is a tendency in that direction which I think will be one of great utility. Then comes the point whether this Committee will tend to diminish or increase the expenditure. Of course everything depends upon the policy carried out. I think there is more reason why a proposal of this kind should diminish instead of increasing expenditure, because, while it will enable the shortcomings to be more patent, it will at the same time be bringing the Army element into such close relation to the naval element that it will enable them to spend less money in one direction so as to counterbalance more being spent in another direction. Of course it does not follow that the expenditure will be reduced, and everything depends upon the way this work is done, but I think there is *primâ facie* evidence that there is more reason to expect a diminution of expenditure than an increase.

I now return to some utterances from the hon. Member for King's Lynn. He enumerated a very large number of guarantees which we have signed, and responsibilities and obligations which we have incurred in various parts of the world, and he mentioned Belgium, Switzerland, Asia Minor, the Far East, Muscat, and so forth. He mentioned them as if they were to come within the purview of this new Committee of Defence. But is that the case? Surely it is to act as a Consultative Committee and not to deal with these general questions of policy for which the Cabinet alone can be responsible. No doubt the hon. Member for King's Lynn was correct in his surmise that upon these questions certain distinct duties might be offered to this Committee. I will take a concrete instance. There is the question of our responsibilities with regard to Belgium. Those obligations rest upon the treaty made in the thirties and a memorandum of 1870. The Cabinet must know to what extent those old obligations still hold good and to what extent it would be desirable to carry them into effect. They can probably ascertain all this from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, but they should also have some knowledge as to how those obligations could be carried out. By means of a Committee of this kind, such information would be placed within their purview and it would be at their very doors. Not only would this Committee enable the Cabinet to know how these obligations should be discharged, but also, if there were any doubt in the mind of the Cabinet as to whether that obligation was still in existence, the advice of a Committee of that kind purely on the strategic side of the question might afford the determining factor to continue or not continue that obligation. There might arise naval or military considerations, and the preliminary advice given on these grounds alone by a Committee of that kind would be a very useful factor in determining the Cabinet to arrive at this or that decision. Of course this question is one which rests entirely with the Cabinet, and they ought not to shift their responsibility on to the back of a Committee of that kind.

I might go into those obligations enumerated by the hon. Member for King's Lynn, and it seems to me that questions of that kind do not rest with the suggested Committee of Defence, although that Committee might furnish most useful advice from a strategic point of view, in the event of any doubt arising as to whether those obligations were in our power to discharge, and whether it was our duty to discharge them. There is one point of detail, and it is in regard to the way those records should be kept. I understand by an interjection made by the Prime Minister that these records are to be kept in the Foreign Office. I do not know whether he means they are to be kept by a Foreign Office clerk, or kept in the custody of the Foreign Secretary. A copy of these records will be kept at the War Office, at the Admiralty, and also at the Foreign Office. Obviously the risk of publicity becomes greater when you have three records than when you have one, and this fact ought not to be left out of sight. Perhaps some means may be adopted by which any danger of that kind may be prevented. These are matters perhaps more of detail than for consideration at the present stage of the discussion, and, in conclusion, I desire merely to say that on general grounds, and with full reservation as to details, I desire to welcome the scheme which has been placed before the House to-day.

*MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): It seems to me there is not much to be said against this scheme on principle, and what there is to be said is more upon matters of detail. This has been an interesting opportunity for considering what details there are likely to be. The hon. Member for King's Lynn was quite on wrong ground, and very dangerous ground, when he advocated the formation of a large paid Commission. What we want to establish is Cabinet responsibility and not a separate paid body which will enable the Cabinet to shift its responsibility. I think we ought also to declare as distinctly as possible that we stand for Cabinet responsibility. The hon. Member for Dundee threw cold water on the proposal, and compared the proposed Committee, in a rather disparaging manner, to the Board of Trade. He said that on the Board of Trade there were such members as the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Speaker of the House of Commons. As a matter of fact, this Committee is the exact antithesis to that. In this case the members are not nominal, and—if I may use the word—ornamental; they are experts, and are there for a purpose. The hon. Member has also said that there is danger of disagreement on the Committee. I do not see why, because there is a divergence of opinion between politicians, and the military members that should at all impair the value of the judgments they will arrive at or the the advice they give. I do not see that the country will necessarily gain by having special men devoting their whole time to the work. I am not sure that you could find a body of professional men whose whole time would be worth the money; nor would their knowledge, opportunities of judging, or sources of information be adequate to the duties they would have to perform.

I would like to know how the archives of the Committee are to be kept, an who is to record the decisions, because the impression these records will have upon successors in office is a very important matter. I see nothing ridiculous or obviously impossible in having a professional archivist. The Clerk of the Council is an official who is not overworked, and it might very well be his duty to be the professional archivist. What you want, and what of course you must have is a complete equipment of modern information. We must not on any account have a stereotyped or stale Committee. You must have not only a body of men living in the thick of politics, but also those who have the latest or liveliest knowledge of what is going on in naval and military circles. One point has not been mentioned. If one Minister more than another ought to be on the Committee it is the Colonial Secretary. Why the President of the Council of Education is on the Committee I do not know, and it is not my business to inquire. I think the Government deserve our gratitude and the gratutide of the country for instituting this Committee, or perhaps I ought to say the gratitude of the country for instituting it, and our gratitude for giving us an opportunity of having this very interesting discussion upon it.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That, in the opinion of the House, the growing needs of the Empire require the establishment of the Committee of Defence on a permanent footing."

NAVAL FORCES BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

And, there being no further Business set down for the Afternoon Sitting, Mr. Speaker left the Chair until this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

THE PENRHYN QUARRY DISPUTE.

*MR. WILLIAM JONES (Carnarvonshire, Arfon) moved the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, "The severe privation and loss arising from the struggle in the Penrhyn quarry district, the recent grave recommendation of the Carnarvonshire Standing Joint Committee in reporting thereon, and the failure to put into operation the provisions of the Conciliation Act to terminate the dispute."

He said this unfortunate dispute had been prolonged for two years and three months, and he assigned the reason in the main to the fact that the settlement after the last dispute in 1897 was not administered in its principle by the management and owner of the quarry. As was well known, in that dispute the Board of Trade finally intervened, and a settlement was arrived at between Lord Penrhyn and the workmen. That settlement made the men accept an agreement which gave them only a limited and restricted right of combination, under which grievances were to be brought before the management by means of sectional or class representation. The result had been that the whole quarry was not represented in bringing the grievances before the management, but only a section of the quarrymen through their representatives. Although that was only a limited and restricted aspect of representation, the men were willing to abide by it. As far as he knew there had been no reason to complain of the spirit of the men in carrying out the principle of the settlement, and that settlement might have worked well had a good spirit existed between the management and the workmen. But from the management point of view the agreement never worked satisfactorily. One of the first to make use of its provisions was the Chairman of the Strike Committee, Mr. William R Evans, one of the finest characters of the Bethesda district, who had worked in the quarry for fifty-two years, and a man who was considered one of Nature's gentlemen. When he approached the manager, under the agreement, he was told the interview was granted to him in order to impress upon his mind, and that of the others, that the manager could expel whom he wished without giving any reason.

That was the first method of administering the agreement after the men had decided to go in. There were several cases of harsh and arbitrary conduct, and sectional representation became another word for individual dealing. As the chief parts of the settlement still held good, and the men were satisfied with the provisions of the settlement, it was necessary to see what reason there could be for the present strike. Well, Clause 5 provided for the re-admission of the men to the quarry, and stated that all who desired work would be admitted in a body as far as practicable, and the remainder as soon as work could be arranged for them. That clause was the first to be broken by the management. The solicitor to Lord Penrhyn, Mr. Lloyd Carter, who partly drafted the agreement, said at a mass meeting of the men at Bethesda that there should be no black list. All the men should be admitted at once if possible, but if not the remainder as soon as practicable; but the first week twenty-five were refused admission. Though Mr. Lloyd Carter interpreted that clause in exactly the same way as the leaders of the men, in spite of that Mr. Young, the chief manager, persisted in declining to re-admit these twenty-five men. It was suggested that some of them were drunkards and that others were incapacitated, yet these men, who were incapacitated in 1897, had been re-admitted into the quarry in 1900. All the men who had taken a prominent part in the strike were under a special disadvantage, and became marked men, especially where the minor officials were concerned, and after this strike began, when the leaders of the men met Mr. Young and complained of the harsh treatment and abuse by minor officials he said, "How can you complain when you compel these minor officials to be out of work for eleven months?" That was the spirit in which the chief manager dealt with the grievance against the minor officials. Grievances of a serious character accumulated. This quarry was four miles long, three wide and nearly a mile deep, and in normal times about 3,000 men were engaged in it; and although the rock men in the quarry, which was the largest slate quarry in the world, were among the most intelligent of their class, the labourers and rubble workers were somewhat untutored. Under this settlement if a labourer had a grievance it must be laid before the management, either by himself or in company with five other monoglot Welshmen. He could not be represented by his skilled brother-worker. How could they put their grievances before the managers, who were Englishmen? The men had never asked for recognition of their claim to be represented by a trades union, but only to be represented by their fellow-workers. They were denied that right, and complained that they were not treated as self-respecting men. It was the most moderate demand that had ever been made in the history of trades unionism. They were sworn at, abused, punished for trivial offences, and subjected to a system of espionage.

A gentleman had been made sub-manager who had been accustomed to dealing with coolies in India, and who knew nothing about quarrying. The men were suspended for a few days if they were a few minutes late, one of their customary holidays was taken from them, and many of them were compelled to work under the sweating system. In fact, the harsh and oppressive treatment of the men made their position intolerable, and the result was a constant accumulation of petty personal grievances, producing a bitter feeling against the management. That, combined with the fear that the contract system would be extended and harsh discipline enforced, culminated in 1900 in a very unfortunate attack upon some of the contractors, mostly by wild, irresponsible youths, which the leaders of the men themselves condemned. Lord Penrhyn took action against twenty-six men, the great majority of whom were afterwards proved to have had no participation whatever in the disturbances. Yet Lord Penrhyn dismissed these twenty-six men from the quarry before their trial. He was at the trial and heard all the evidence, and twenty of these men were discharged without a tittle of evidence being produced against them; the others had small fines inflicted on them. Knowing that the majority of these men were innocent, 3,000 quarrymen marched from Bethesda to Bangor to attend the trial. They marched peaceably, but the police were afraid there would be a conflict, and the military were called out. Upon his appeal to them in their own language those men returned as peaceably as they came, and the colonel of the regiment asked "In God's name, what are we here for"? which showed what law-abiding citizens these men were. After that the men resumed work, but when the tellers were telling the galleries the men saw eight galleries were left idle, and the men thought the workers in those galleries were being punished because the men had marched to Bangor to give evidence at the trial. A spirit of inaction crept over all the workmen at the quarry in consequence. Mr. Young telephoned from his office, five miles away, when the men were discussing the position, that they must either resume work or leave the quarry, and thereupon all the men left in a body. That was the beginning of the strike.

Many efforts had been made by the men to settle the dispute. They consented to meet Lord Penrhyn at his (Mr. Jones') request, but Lord Penrhyn was mute. They asked for arbitration, but got no reply from Lord Penrhyn. Two magistrates, on behalf of the Carnarvonshire County Council, were appointed to endeavour to bring the two parties together, but Lord Penrhyn pleaded illness, and referred them to Mr. Young. Subsequently his lordship declined to grant them an interview, because he could not recognise the principle of outside interference, but said, "I grant you permission to give advice to my employees." The negotiations failed, but the deputation put on record that the men waived every point that could be an obstacle, and that they attributed the failure to Lord Penrhyn. On August 8th last he appealed to the Board of Trade, through the President in the House, from whom he had always received the greatest personal kindness. But that was not a personal matter, but involved a fundamental principle between employer and workmen, and the peace and welfare of a whole community. He asked why the Board of Trade, after two years of that dispute, did not make an inquiry and an emphatic statement before the world as to their opinion on the dispute. Since that time the workmen had applied to come under the operation of the Act, and still the right hon. Gentleman had flatly refused to meet them, and without giving any satisfactory reasons. A resolution had been passed by the men asking Lord Penrhyn to accept as arbitrator the Prime Minister or Lord Rosebery, but he refused to have anything to do with one or the other, or both. They wrote him a second letter from Bethesda, and Lord Penrhyn consented to an interview on condition that all claims for a restoration to power of the old Quarry Committee were abandoned. They assented, and said they would simply stick to the principle of representation alone, so that the House would see they waived every objection which Lord Penrhyn could possibly raise. But that did not satisfy Lord Penrhyn, who replied that he would not discuss the question of representation except from his own point of view.

One great issue which had divided Lord Penrhyn and the men for the last two years and three months was that the men should have the right to represent their grievances before the management by means of freely-appointed delegates. What had been the attitude of the men during all this struggle? He challenged anybody to name any labour dispute which had been prolonged for such a time, and in which such a number of men had been engaged, where the damage to property had been smaller or more insignificant. Colonel Ruck, the Chief Constable of Carnarvonshire had given evidence upon this question before a sub-committee of the County Council as follows:

> "The cost of extra police amounted to £2,700. There were fewer instances (than in 1901) of workmen being followed and molested by crowds, but instances here and there of petty molestation, such as abusive language towards the workmen, hooting them, beating tins as they return from work. Complaints of this form of annoyance, which it must be said have sometimes been of rather a trivial nature, were received almost daily from the quarry authorities. It has certainly, too, been aggravated in some instances by the behaviour of some of the workmen themselves. With regard to stone-throwing, I may say that although a good many windows have been broken I have not heard of anyone being seriously injured."

Three hundred of the men who had returned to work were met by Lord Penrhyn in the quarry, where he made a speech to them and gave to each of them one sovereign. Why could he not meet all the quarrymen in the same way and on the same footing as he had met the strikers whom he took on and gave a sovereign apiece?

He now came to the last inquiry of all, made on the spot at the instance of the County Council of Carnarvonshire through their Standing Joint Committee. They appointed a sub-committee to inquire into the state of affairs in the county and the additional expenditure upon the police at the end of last year. The leaders of the men were asked to give evidence, and so was Mr. Young, the chief manager at the quarry. The leaders of the men willingly gave evidence, but Mr. Young refused. Two reports on this question had been issued during the last month as a result, and he should like to call the attention of the House to them. The state of affairs astounded the gentlemen who sat upon this sub-committee, and they had no conception of the bitterness engendered by the dispute. This Committee reported that—

> "They had no conception before the inquiry of the extent of bitterness engendered by this quarrel. Families were divided, members being estranged so as not to be on speaking terms. They had undoubted proofs of genuine efforts on the part of ministers of religion and other leading inhabitants on the side of law and order; they think that exaggerated reports influenced the Chief Constable's mind somewhat unduly in seeking outside assistance, both police and military. The percentage of convictions obtained by the police is considerably under the normal ratio, and this shows that more care and discrimination should have been exercised in instituting proceedings. Their conclusion from the mass of evidence is that in the exercise of what they conceived to be their principal duty, viz., the protection of workmen employed at the quarry, they failed to show due consideration for the feelings and, on occasions, for the liberty of the late employees

and others. They consider that the method by which complaints of men at work were conveyed to the police by the quarry officials were calculated to do mischief, to increase the tension and deepen the ill-feeling already existing between the parties. They think the extra expenditure for police charges, £4,418 8s. 11d., most exorbitant.

The Committee recommended the Standing Joint Committee to memorialise the Government, praying the Board of Trade to hold an inquiry with a view to bringing the dispute to an end. Why did they do that? Because the County Council had exhausted all their sources of conciliation, and, therefore, he claimed that the men had a right to appeal now, as they did, to the final tribunal of the nation—Parliament. That was what he was doing now. The Board of Trade, in reply to a communication from the men, refused to meet them without any adequate reason being given. The long duration of this unfortunate quarrel had caused widespread poverty in the district and serious industrial and commercial losses to be suffered by the country, and now they had reached such a point as to call for the intervention of His Majesty's Government. There was a Minority Report issued, signed by only one gentleman and approved by others, and what did that Report say in regard to the conduct of Mr. Young, the chief manager? This Report speaks of his conduct as "the fatuous conduct of Mr. Young in refusing to give evidence." When the whole question was brought before this Joint Committee, the Lord Lieutenant of the County spoke in the same way, for he said—

> "He failed to approve of the 'fatuous attitude' of Mr. Young, and could not see why Mr. Young should have done himself and the workmen the injustice involved by not appearing to give evidence."

This Minority Report was made by friends of Lord Penrhyn, and they asked for the withdrawal of the police force.

He should like to refer to a speech made by the Chairman of the Standing Joint Committee, who was himself a quarry owner. He was a Scotch gentleman and also a Conservative in politics, like Lord Penrhyn. His name was Mr. Menzies. He said—

> "The whole community deserved the greatest possible credit for the self-restraint they had shown considering the feeling that had existed. It was a marvel that there had not been far more disturbances, and he felt proud of everybody concerned for their conduct. There had been many cases of indiscretion, but taking the whole circumstances into consideration he saw nothing to be ashamed of."

And at the end of his speech this shrewd Scotch gentleman, who had worked among the quarrymen for thirty-three years, stated that—

> "With an experience of thirty-three years of the Welsh quarrymen, he would, by meeting the men in friendly conference, have settled the points at issue in the dispute in half an hour."

Now, in the face of this dispute and this great struggle between the workmen employed in the quarry and Lord Penrhyn, what had been the attitude of the managers? Mr. Young himself had now to confess that most of the men who had gone in had given up their chapels, and had either joined the Church of England or else had attended no place of worship at all. There had been a wholesale proselytising. Mr. Young had asserted that no fewer than sixty Wesleyan Methodists had left their denomination and joined the Church since they came back to the quarry. How many of the men who struck work had gone away? About 1,400 of the men who had struck had gone away, 800 remained at home because they could not find employment, and about 100 had died during the struggle. About 500 were now working in the quarry out of a total of 2,800 who originally worked there, but what was the attitude of those men who had gone in? There was a lack of discipline in the quarry, and the discipline was so lax and loose that men had been suspended for drunkenness who before would have been dismissed. Mr. Young admitted himself that the output of the quarry was a failure, and it was being worked at a loss, and yet Lord Penrhyn persisted in working that quarry. They knew he was working the quarry at a loss because he had appealed to the Assessment Committee, and it was shown that the output was less to-day than ever. Supposing Lord Penrhyn compelled all these men, by driving them to desperation or starvation and humiliating them, to go back to the quarry, what would be the result? Why, they would go back to the old *régime* and the quarry would be placed under the same strict discipline as before. Was it not a pity, in these days of employers and employed meeting round a board of conciliation, that Lord Penrhyn would not meet the leaders of the men, who desired to go back on honourable terms, and so bring peace to this great industrial and most law-abiding community? The men were amongst the most law-abiding citizens on the face of the globe. Everybody knew how they had built their own chapels and schools, and probably some might say that this was a proof that Lord Penrhyn had behaved generously in regard to their wages. That was not so, for he knew workmen in some districts who had been receiving much better wages, and yet they had not shown the same amount of self-sacrifice as these men. Lord Penrhyn ought to be proud of those men. Many of them had built their houses on Lord Penrhyn's land, and they clung to their homes. Some of the men lived in the houses which their fathers had built, and the leases having lapsed, those houses fell into Lord Penrhyn's hands again. The men clung to the houses, and that was the reason why they were so reluctant to leave their homes.

Would it be believed that during the whole of this dispute there had not been a single case of poaching on the whole estate? He had seen pheasants as thick as crows there, and not a single pheasant, partridge or hare had been touched, and he believed there had only been one case of salmon baiting. But what had been the result? Dire distress and privation, trade paralysed, shopkeepers and tradesmen brought to the brink of bankruptcy, and the men who had found work in South Wales had been obliged to keep two homes going with a small pittance. Many of these men had managed to save £50 or £60, and they had just eked out a living spreading over these two years, and when the pinch of hunger came, they were too proud to ask for alms or relief. He had seen their starving children, for he had visited their homes. He knew of a man with seven children, with three of the youngest unable to walk, and one of them had lately died. Some of the children had been kept from school and kept in bed until midday in order to save a meal. There was one man with a large family who, having been brought to the brink of starvation by the strike, yielded and went back to the quarry. He became demented, and, after stating that he had turned traitor, he committed suicide. The sum of £30,000 had been subscribed to the Penrhyn Relief Fund, but what was £30,000 amongst so many? What was that sum compared with the £300,000 which they would have earned in wages? When these men were in work they earned £12,000 a month. Of course, £30,000 helped, but it was not enough. He thanked all those who had contributed to the Relief Funds, and he thanked the newspaper Press of this country and all those who had supported the movement to help these starving people. But wealth would not do what they wanted. These men did not ask for charity, but they craved for decent, honourable work.

He would come back now to the basis of the men's demand. They demanded the same right as was asked for by all trades unions, namely, freedom to elect their own representatives in their own way, and to make the cause of one the cause of all. When such cases were dealt with in this way by a gentleman like Lord Penrhyn, it made them wish for the adoption of something like compulsory arbitration. Other countries, like the United States, had their leading men, like President Roosevelt, making strenuous efforts to bring a great labour war to a close; was it too much to make an appeal to the highest tribunal in this land to bring about a settlement of this dispute, such as neither petty spite nor recrimination on either side could spoil a settlement in spirit and in truth?

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) seconded the Motion, and said that one of the greatest evils of the strike was the injury that had been done to the public interest in the county, and the social and trade disturbance. That justified this House in pressing both parties to meet and endeavour to come to some decision. It was a strange thing that four years after the Conciliation Act was passed a strike should commence, involving 3,000 persons and running for over two years, without any attempt to put the Act into operation. All along a settlement had been hampered by the consideration that any action on the part of the men might be misconstrued, and that any attempt to appeal to the Conciliation Act would be assumed by Lord Penrhyn to arise from weakness and from a desire to find a loophole of escape from the position they were in. When pressure was in the first instance put upon the Board of Trade to take action in the matter, it was pointed out that they had not been applied to by either of the parties concerned. He did not for a moment suggest that the Board's reluctance to act arose in any degree from a spirit of obstinacy, or that there was not a genuine wish to put an end to the struggle; he took it, rather, that their inaction was due to an apprehension that any steps they might take would be liable to misconstruction. Now the excuse made in the first instance by the Board of Trade no longer existed, but yet they had not moved, and it was difficult to surmise what was the reason. It might be that the Board of Trade still saw no prospect of any useful conclusion resulting from their efforts, but, having regard to the fact that the strike had now lasted for two years and a half, surely an effort should be made. The excuse had even been advanced that the Board of Trade were afraid of doing more harm than good by forcing the parties further apart instead of bringing them more closely together, but, when the struggle had lasted two and a half years, it was surely idle to talk of the possibility of doing more harm than good, for as much harm had been done as possibly could be done. The right hon. Gentleman might say, "Well, we shall only be severely snubbed by Lord Penrhyn if we make an effort." That might, possibly, be assumed, but one reason for the passing of the Act of 1896 was that it gave the Board of Trade a greater right of interference. It did not, it was true, confer on the Board any power they did not before possess, but, as was pointed out at the time by the then President, now Chancellor of the Exchequer, it at least enabled them to act with some justification and Parliamentary authority—that was to say, if asked what business they had to interfere, they could reply, "We are charged by Parliament with the duty of endeavouring to assist in arriving at a compromise."

Surely the present case was one in which the Board should take action, not so much, even, out of consideration for the Penrhyn quarrymen as in the public interest. He did not forget that on a previous occasion Lord Penrhyn had somewhat resented the interference of the Board of Trade, but the fact remained that a settlement did follow on that occasion, and no one could say to what extent that was brought about, or at least led up to, by the fact that public attention had been drawn to the matter by the Board's action and by the intimation of their view as to who was chiefly to blame. He believed that if similar action was taken on the present occasion there would at least be a possibility of useful results, and a certainty that no worse state of things could follow than that at present existing. The conciliation question in the dispute was that of representation, and he could not help thinking that Lord Penrhyn had failed to make himself acquainted with the industrial conditions prevailing in other parts of the country, because he was making a claim which was not, so far as he (the speaker) was aware, made by any other employer or body of employers. There were other men of position who were as great employers of labour as Lord Penrhyn—Lord Londonderry and Lord Durham, for instance—but they had never taken up the position of declining to accept the representatives of the workmen, and only permitting them to make their representations through channels provided by the employers. Lord Penrhyn called representation of the workmen interference with the management of the quarry, but it was really he who was interfering with the management of the men's business, for surely the manner in which the men chose to lay their case before Lord Penrhyn was a matter for them and not for him. If they chose, for instance, to retain Sir Edward Clarke, and pay him a hundred guineas a day, what right had Lord Penrhyn to object? It rested with him, of course, to say what answer he should make to the men's representations, by whomever made. He believed Lord Penrhyn had formed the impression that these strikes were due, in some occult way, to what were called "agitators," or to the Trades Union. If anything was more absolutely demonstrable than another it was this—that not one of the strikes which had taken place in Carnarvonshire within his recollection had been due in the slightest degree to the action of the Trades Union, and that was particularly so in the present case. The great fault he had to find with the Trades Union in connection with the slate quarries was not that it was too strong, but that it was too weak, for if it was stronger the possibilities of peace in the quarries would be greater. The unfortunate thing was that there was a most extraordinary and unfounded distrust, on the part of Lord Penrhyn, of everyone who had anything to do with advising the men. Naturally, in a struggle like that, the leaders stood by the men, and sought to gain conditions which, if secured, would make for peace, not only in Lord Penrhyn's quarries, but elsewhere.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn." (*Mr. William Jones.*)

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said he was glad of an opportunity of speaking before the President of the Board of Trade replied, because he was anxious to make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman on the basis of the Conciliation Act. He was sure that the picture that had been drawn by the hon. Member for Carnarvon of the position of affairs at the quarries must have touched the heart of everyone who heard it, whatever might be his views as to the merits of the dispute. He did not propose to go into the history of the case, nor did he think it wise to discuss the merits of the issue between Lord Penrhyn and his men. He would only ask whether a case had not arisen in which the provisions of the Act of 1896 might fairly and properly be put into operation. Grave as was the present struggle, vast as was the amount of human happiness involved, there was to be considered an even wider issue, because if the Government refused to take action in this case, who could say when the provisions of the Act would be put into force at all? The present case surely called for action as strongly as any which could possibly be imagined, because it had lasted a very long time and was on a very large scale. What, he asked, was it that the Act contemplated? It gave power to the Board of Trade, on the application of the employers or workmen interested, and taking into consideration the means of conciliation in the district, power to appoint a person or persons to act as conciliators and to endeavour to bring about a settlement, and also to report to the Board of Trade. Would the House consider what that meant? It was not arbitration. They were perhaps apt, in considering a case of that nature, to confound arbitration with conciliation, and he could quite conceive objections to the appointment of an arbitrator; but the proposal in the first instance was simply to appoint a person who should hear all that was to be said, not merely by the parties directly concerned, but, if necessary, by other persons in the district, and should endeavour to form a fair judgment on what, after such inquiry, he believed to be the merits of the case. Conciliation had many advantages and many avenues of hope which arbitration had not. If a conciliator was appointed, there was nothing to show that Lord Penrhyn would not be willing to reconsider the position he had taken up, but, let that be as it might, the power to make such an appointment had been given to the Board of Trade by the House in 1896 on the express representation of the then President that the hands of himself and his successors would be materially strengthened by it, since they could then say, if told that their interference was unasked for and unwelcome, "It is not our action; it is that of the Legislature." Therefore, he did not think the Board of Trade were entitled, in a matter of so much gravity, to say that this was one of the cases which they ought to leave alone, since there was substantially a direction by the Legislature that action should be taken in such cases.

Nor should it be forgotten that it was far easier for contending parties to yield with a good grace when a third party intervened. Wherein lay the great advantage of international arbitration? It lay in the fact that, when two nations were standing each upon a point of honour and each was unwilling to yield, an international court of arbitration or conciliation enabled one of them to give way without humiliation by adopting the way out of the difficulty suggested by the arbitrator or conciliator. The parallel between an international dispute and a case like the present was very close, for here, also, there was involved a point of honour on which neither party thought themselves justified in surrendering. Suppose, however, there were a judicious person looking at the matter all round and endeavouring to save the *amour propre* of the party which he thought ought to yield, would matters not be rendered very much easier? He could not resign the hope that the action of a judicious conciliator might, even in the present case, bitter as the feeling on both sides seemed to have become, lead to some terms of settlement which might be accepted by both parties.

But there was another way in which the action of a conciliator might be of use: he had the power to make a report. One great influence had not yet been adequately brought to bear on this question —he meant the influence of public opinion —for the statements that had so far been made had been *ex parte*, and he could fully understand the attitude of a man who said that he had only heard one side of a case and declined to express an opinion until he had also heard the other. But there was a volume of honest, sound, public opinion in the country, which would, he believed, be influenced on one side or the other by the unbiassed report of a conciliator. For that reason, also, he consequently hoped that an attempt would be made to put into operation the powers conferred by the Act. Surely the present was not a case in which it could properly be said that nothing should be done. A far greater and more dangerous strike than that at the Penrhyn Quarries occurred only a few months ago in the United States, and the President himself, at the risk of his own popularity, endeavoured to deal with the case. He did not believe that in the present instance the purpose of the Legislature as expressed in the Act of 1896 was going to be lost sight of. He felt perfectly sure that the President of the Board of Trade himself had every sympathy with those who were suffering through the Penrhyn strike, and he trusted that the appeal which had been made with so much force by his hon. friend would induce the Government to endeavour to meet this melancholy case, and by some means or other to replace these unhappy workmen in the condition of prosperity they formerly enjoyed.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) said he associated himself entirely with the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken, and did so not at all from the point of view of the working man but as an employer of labour. He had been an employer for a longer time than Lord Penrhyn, and on a much larger scale, and he had come to the conclusion that it was wise for employers, in endeavouring to come to terms with their men over any trade dispute, to allow the men to choose their own representatives. He would consider himself absolutely wanting in an honest and manly spirit of fair play if he did not allow the workmen—aye, and encouraged them—to choose the best man they could get when they were discussing a matter of business with him. What would be said if, in the High Court of Justice, an ignorant man was not permitted to state his case except by his own untutored lips? He himself had had a careful training in his youth, and he naturally—without boasting but as a matter of course—had a quicker mind than the poor fellows who might believe that they had suffered unjustly by something that had been done on his behalf. He repeated that he would be wanting in manliness if he prevented those men from speaking to him not only by the best representatives they could find among themselves but the best they could find in the world. He had risen to show that the appeal for the intervention of the President of the Board of Trade was made not only by the representatives of working men or of the constituency immediately concerned, but by men in other positions in life, and he begged the right hon. Gentleman, for the credit of employers and of Parliament, and for the sake of peace, to use his power to bring the pressure of public opinion to bear on this dispute.

*SIR ALFRED THOMAS (Glamorganshire, E.) said that few, if any, of those who listened to the eloquent and pathetic speech in which his hon. friend, some years since, called the attention of the House to the then pending dispute between Lord Penrhyn and his workmen, would have believed it to be possible, after such a lapse of time, that such a terrible state of affairs would prevail again at the present time. He believed that the difference between Lord Penrhyn and his workmen arose from a misconception on the part of the former as to his duties and obligations as the proprietor of a great commercial trading industry. He wished to differentiate as between Lord Penrhyn and his agent, for if what they were told in the public prints was true, he was an unmitigated tyrant, and it was a scandal that such a man should have it in his power to tyrannise his fellow men. Lord Penrhyn attempted to manage the affairs of his works on the principle "cannot a man do what he likes with his own?" That depended upon what a man liked. If the result of what a man liked was to drive away more than two thousand men from their homes—homes that many of them had, through thrift and industry, built for themselves—or to cause untold misery and suffering to hundreds of defenceless women and children, then whatever legal right he might have, moral right he had none.

Lord Penrhyn wished to treat his employees on the same terms as his gamekeepers and his gardeners. But the Bethesda quarry, in times of peace and prosperity, was one of the most extensive of its kind in the world, and carried on for trading purposes, and if Lord Penrhyn wished to become a trader, then he, like so many other noblemen who had become traders, must be amenable to such rules and regulations as were in force in similar undertakings, in which a perfect right to combine and organise was given unquestioned to workmen. Lord Penrhyn's workmen, however, were much more modest in their demands; but modest as they had been and were, they had only met with a treatment which was quite unworthy of men in responsible positions. But it was not to be inferred that the men were not determined to have, within reason and justice, the exercise of their common rights. Should Lord Penrhyn, unfortunately, still persist in resisting the principle for which they had made such great sacrifices, then he would find, as other territorial magnates had found, the truth of the Welsh proverb, "Trech gwlad nag arglwydd"—"The people are stronger than a lord." He sincerely hoped that wiser counsel would prevail, and that the disastrous dispute would be terminated, so that peace and prosperity might return to a large working community, whose moral and industrial character is not excelled on the whole earth.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid) said he was a great believer in conciliation, and Parliament having provided the Board of Trade with certain powers, the right hon. Gentleman ought not to be diffident, but rather eager, to put those powers into force to bring an end to this dispute. In 1896, when the Conciliation Act was passed, the then President of the Board of Trade used these words—

> "There was another provision in the Bill to which the Government attached considerable importance, viz., that the Department was empowered to intervene on its own initiative with a view to bringing the parties together under a Chairman mutually agreed upon, or, failing that, one appointed by the Board of Trade. It was also provided that the Department might intervene on the application of either party to the dispute and appoint a conciliator *ad hoc* or make use of existing boards of arbitration."

In that statement the then President framed the indictment on which the present President stood on his trial. He had been requested to act by one party, but had turned a deaf ear to the appeal. No man, simply to gratify his own desires, ought to be allowed to depopulate a whole neighbourhood. These men merely asked for that which was conceded in every other part of the country. He and others who represented large organisations were not only allowed, but were asked, to meet the employers of the men they represented, and he appealed to all large employers of labour in the House, who had the welfare of the industries of the country at heart, whether they would not rather meet the elected representatives of the men than have loose masses of men to deal with. A more respectable and decent class of men than these in question could not be found in the kingdom, but because they would not allow Lord Penrhyn to assume the *rôle* of dictator, they were being driven away from the homes they loved. Surely Parliament ought to put an end to such a state of things. This man was jeopardising the trade of the country. Through his action trade was shifting, and once trade shifted it was extremely difficult to regain. The country itself, therefore, had a stake in the dispute. Moreover, Lord Penrhyn was fostering feelings of discontent, animosity, and hostility between workmen and employers.

The trend of the present age was in the direction of conciliation, but Lord Penrhyn by his action was retarding the development of that spirit. It had been said that this dispute would strengthen the movement for compulsory arbitration. He did not believe in compulsion. Compulsion and conciliation were inconsistent terms. He believed in conciliation, and to show that there was a growing willingness on the part of workmen to submit their disputes to conciliation, he might point out that in 1897, less than 750,000 people were under the influence of conciliation boards, while in 1902 the number was 1,250,000; and whereas in 1897 only 2 per cent. of the disputes settled in the year were settled by conciliation, in 1901 the percentage was fifty-four. The House of Commons, who were not merely the makers of the law, but the custodians of the best interests of the country, ought to do all in its power to prevent anything which would have the effect of retarding that tendency towards conciliation. It might be said that the work was there if the men would do it. He was a man of peace, but not of peace at any price. He would be the last man in the world to fan a strike or to encourage strife, but he honoured these men for their refusal to accept work on the terms offered, and he hoped the Trades Unions of the country would see that they were lifted above the impingement of poverty. This object-lesson of the anachronism of tyranny in present times would stand out as an indication of the possibility of some men to act rudely and cruelly to their fellow-creatures. He urged the right hon. Gentleman to brush aside any little technicalities or red-tapeism that might exist, and endeavour to put an end to this disastrous struggle.

MR. MIDDLEMORE (Birmingham, N.) desired to join in the appeal made from the other side of the House. The situation was very serious. There really must be a point at which the Board of Trade would intervene in the direction of conciliation. What was the situation? Nearly 2,300 men were out of employment; 100 men had died; one had committed suicide; families were separated; a community was broken up; heads of families were exiles; women and children were suffering and being underfed. That was a very grave situation. It had to be admitted, too, that on the part of the men, judging them fairly and taking them all in all, there had been much self-restraint; while on the part of Lord Penrhyn and Mr. Young, to put it mildly, there had been not a little aloofness, and something of repulsion. He earnestly and sincerely appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to act. By doing so he would exalt his own reputation before the country, and make thousands of Welshmen, and also of Englishmen, call down blessings on his head.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT (Cheshire, Macclesfield) said he only rose for the purpose of stating why he did not intend to intervene in the debate. The House was probably not aware that there was an action pending, which raised the whole question as to whether Lord Penrhyn had, or had not, refused his quarrymen the right of combination. The action was likely to commence on Monday, and he thought that, for that reason, it was extremely improper that that action should be now discussed. He did not intend to say anything further, because anything he might say might be taken as coming from Lord Penrhyn, and it would be extremely improper for Lord Penrhyn to say anything which would prejudice the action.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds Central) said the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Arfon Division made a long and eloquent speech, but he thought the hon. Member would hardly dispute the correctness of his description, when he said that that speech consisted, not so much of an attack on the Board of Trade, as an attack on Lord Penrhyn and the management of the Penrhyn quarry. He could not accept the statements of the hon. Gentleman with reference to Lord Penrhyn, and he could not help agreeing with his hon. friend in the regret he expressed that the debate should have taken place at that particular moment, in view of the action that was to be heard. He would confine himself within the limit which he thought was strictly and properly observed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen, and that was whether the Board of Trade was or was not right in its decision not to intervene in this dispute. Before he entered on that question he would say a few words with reference to what fell from the hon. Member.

The hon. Member spoke of heartlessness and callousness, and rather implied that the action of the Board of Trade, by not intervening in this dispute, was an indication of heartlessness and callousness. He hoped it was not necessary for him to defend himself or the Board against any insinuation of that kind; and he could assure the House that if he thought it possible to bring this lamentable dispute to an end by intervening he should certainly have intervened. There appeared to him to be great misconception and misunderstanding in the House as to the powers which the Arbitration Act conferred upon the Board of Trade. The Act was purely voluntary in its provisions; and it most carefully guarded the discretion of the parties to the dispute to accept the services of the Board of Trade or not. He received not long ago a petition which contained the signatures of no less than sixteen Members of the House. He did not know whether the hon. Member for the Arfon Division signed that petition; but it was signed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean. That petition requested him to use his powers under the Act to arbitrate in the dispute between Lord Penrhyn and his quarrymen. As the hon.. Gentleman the Member for the Arfon Division had admitted, and as he himself had pointed out to the petitioners, the Board of Trade had absolutely no power under the Act to arbitrate unless an application to arbitrate were made by both parties. As the application for arbitration came entirely from one side it was obviously impossible for the Board of Trade to adopt that method of procedure.

What other steps could the Board of Trade take? The Board of Trade might, in response to the appeal made by the workmen at a comparatively late period of the dispute, have appointed a conciliator under the Act. But the Act stated that the Board of Trade might appoint a conciliator on the application of the employer or workman interested only after taking into consideration all the circumstances of the case. He thought it would be obvious to the House that one of the most important circumstances which the Board of Trade was bound to consider, in deciding whether or not it should acquiesce in an application of this kind, was whether the appointment of a conciliator would promote the object for which the Act was passed, namely, the prevention of disputes, or the facilitation of the settlement of a dispute which had arisen. He considered that matter most carefully. He considered all the statements made by the men; he considered the past history of the dispute; he considered the history of the dispute between Lord Penrhyn and his workmen in 1887; and he was forced to the conclusion, if he appointed a conciliator, that Lord Penrhyn would refuse to accept the mediation of any third party, even if that third party were appointed by the Board of Trade. That was the question which he had to decide. When he had reason to know that Lord Penrhyn would not accept the services of a conciliator he was forced to the conclusion that it would not be to the public advantage, nor would be likely to increase the utility of the Board of Trade in subsequent disputes, if, notwithstanding that, he were to attempt to force a conciliator on a reluctant party. He was now speaking of the assumption that the object of appointing a conciliator was to bring the parties together to determine the dispute; and as he regarded that as impossible it appeared to him to be quite useless to appoint a conciliator. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen had suggested that a conciliator might be appointed, not to bring the parties together, but to make a report on the circumstances, in order to guide public opinion, He did not deny that there might be cases where it might become the duty of the Board of Trade under the Act to appoint a person to make a report, and so guide public opinion in the right direction; but he believed those cases to be excessively rare, and he doubted whether since the Act was passed the Board of Trade had in a single case appointed a conciliator, not to bring the parties together, but in order to make a public report on the circumstances of the case.

The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Arfon Division went very minutely into the controversy between Lord Penrhyn and his workmen, but he thought the hon. Gentleman would admit that at the bottom of that dispute there lay the question whether, from Lord Penrhyn's point of view, his workmen in entering into negotiation would be acting under outside influence. Suppose a dispute between an employer and his workmen merely referred to the carrying out of an agreement entered into, it might, in those circumstances, be desirable that the Board of Trade might make a report in order to guide public opinion; but when they came to what the hon. Member for the Arfon Division had described as a point of fundamental principle between employer and employed, the question was raised whether a Government Department was called upon to pronounce an *ex cathedra* opinion upon a matter of that kind. In his judgment it would be most undesirable for a public Department to take that view. If the Board of Trade were to undertake a duty of that kind, it would cripple itself hopelessly in working the Act on all subsequent occasions. No employer would then voluntarily accept the decision of the Board of Trade; and if the decision of the Board were against the employer the Board would be distrusted. If, on the other hand, the Board decided the question against the men, there was not the slightest doubt that the men, in all future disputes, would have exactly the same feeling.

The truth was that the working of the Act required the most anxious discretion on the part of the Board of Trade. They must not try to work the Act as if it were anything else than a purely voluntary Act; and if they did, they were certain to fail. He could not help thinking that the Amendment which the hon. Member for the Arfon Division put down to the Address, but did not move, showed that, in the opinion of the hon. Gentleman, the Board of Trade could not have intervened in this dispute with any

prospect of success, for the terms of that Amendment declared the necessity for further legislation. If the Act gave power to the Board of Trade to arbitrate between Lord Penrhyn and his workmen in those circumstances it would be his duty to intervene; but the Act was altogether on different lines.

As a voluntary Act the Government had considered it their duty to administer it; and if the House were to decide that it would be their duty to interfere in any other conditions, he felt that a great part of the utility of the Act would be destroyed.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said he had listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and he must say, after careful consideration, he had never heard a more hopelessly inadequate defence of the action, or rather the inaction, of a Government Department. What was the defence of the right hon. Gentleman? It was really a matter of very general application. Here was an Act of Parliament which provided that where one party to a dispute refused to proceed to arbitration the Board of Trade might proceed *ex parte* to appoint a conciliator, whether one of the parties consented or not. The right hon. Gentleman proceeded to argue against putting the Act into operation, and he gave reasons; but there were other Acts of Parliament which people did not like to put into operation, and if the President of the Board of Trade would not put an Act of Parliament into operation why should anyone? If this were not a case where Section C of the Act applied, what conceivable circumstances were there which could arise in any labour dispute to which that Section would be applicable. The Act provided that there should be arbitration, that there should be a board of conciliation; and that the Board of Trade might undertake an inquiry. What he complained about was that the Board of Trade had not put into operation the powers given to it under the Act. If that was not a case for the application of the Act what possible case could there be?

The dispute had been prolonged for two and a half years, the whole industry of a district had been paralysed; and, in addition, they had the constant risk of infringements of the law on one side or the other. Infringements were not always on the side of the strikers. He had heard of men who were employed in the quarry who were armed with revolvers, and who had threatened other men from time to time. There was also the case of a man who was driven to madness by hunger. They had heard from the Prime Minister something about the doctrine of human endurance. Two and a half years of hunger and privation would drive men to madness. What might not happen in that district? And if anything happened, the responsibility, in the first instance, would undoubtedly rest with Lord Penrhyn, whose stubbornness had been unparalleled, and who had declined every offer of arbitration; but to a certain degree, responsibility wou'd rest also on those who, having the weapon o an Act of Parliament in their hands, declined to avail themselves of it. Why? Because they were afraid of risking a snub from Lord Penrhyn. What else was it? What possible harm could be done? Supposing the Board of Trade appointed a conciliator—someone, for instance, like Sir Edward Fry, whose impartiality was above suspicion—to examine into all the circumstances. We would have Lord Penrhyn's case in the printed reports, even if Mr Young declined to appear before him. He could have the evidence of the men and of people in the neighbourhood who knew the circumstances; and he would have every opportunity of examining into the facts. What harm could that do? The only harm it could do would be that Lord Penrhyn might take no notice of Sir Edward Fry or the Board of Trade. Was the Government so feeble that it could not survive a snub from Lord Penrhyn? He asked anyone to point out what possible harm it could do. But what good might it not do? In the first place, it was just possible, if they had the judgment of an eminent conciliator like Sir Edward Fry, that even Lord Penrhyn might be induced to climb down and listen to reason. It was a remote contingency, but at the same time they could not bar it out altogether. What more would it do? The men were fighting under very disadvantageous circumstances.

In the correspondence between Lord Penrhyn and the Carnarvon County Council he wrote one day from Penrhyn Castle, the next day from a shooting-box in Conway Bay, another day from Newmarket, and a fourth day from a palace in London. What comparison was there between a man of that kind, and men who had not got a shilling, except as alms from the public? If there was a Report from an impartial conciliator appointed by a Unionist Government, public opinion would back up the men. Was the President of the Board of Trade afraid of that contingency? Was he afraid to give them a weapon which would help them to keep their children from starving?

He would put another question to the right hon. Gentleman. Suppose Lord Penrhyn declined absolutely to meet the conciliator—would the resources of civilisation be then exhausted? If the President of the Board of Trade failed, he would fail having done his duty. If he failed now, he would fail having neglected an obvious duty, a duty imposed upon him by an Act of Parliament, passed by the common consent of both Houses, which instructed him along a path trodden by his predecessors. Was the President of the Board of Trade afraid of Lord Penrhyn's society friends that he would not put an Act of Parliament into operation to protect these poor men who were striving for their rights? If he did so, and there was no result, after all Parliament was the master in this country. What was this quarry? He would not go into the question of Lord Penrhyn's title, but this was common land within the memory of living man. If by prescription Lord Penrhyn had got a legal title, could not the Parliament of Great Britain say: "Here is land which belongs to the people of the district; you are utilising a time title to a property which does not belong to you for the purpose of starving out men."

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT asked whether this was in order. The hon. Member, who was solicitor for the defendant in a case to be heard on Monday next, was raising the question of whether or not Lord Penrhyn had denied his workmen certain rights which the hon. Member thought they ought to have.

*MR. SPEAKER: That depends, of course, on whether that is one of the matters of dispute in the action. If it is one of the matters in dispute awaiting decision, then it is not proper to discuss it. I may add that whatever the value may be of the argument of the hon. Member as to Parliament interfering by legislation in regard to land, it does not arise upon this Motion.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he quite understood it was a great relief to hon. Members opposite that questions of that kind should not be raised, because no one knew better than themselves that they would not stop with Lord Penrhyn. He had carefully guarded himself from dealing with any question raised in the action. Lord Penrhyn was denying to his workmen rights conceded in every great industry in the kingdom. If there ever was a case for Government interference this was one. Yet the President of the Board of Trade was afraid of Lord Penrhyn because he might refuse to answer his letter. What a punishment for a powerful Department! The dispute had gone on for two and a half years, but if it went on much longer the country would not be satisfied until it was put out of an employer's power to reduce the whole community to starvation.

MR. BELL (Derby) associated himself with the protest which had been made against the apathy of the President of the Board of Trade in this matter. He desired to call attention to the fact that the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor put in operation the very Act which they were now discussing. It was most unfortunate that there were people who had the title "Lord" attached to their names, because many of them assumed the power of the Almighty. One of them was Lord Penrhyn. There were other lords who had assumed practically similar authority, but the President of the Board of Trade, on three occasions during the period he had himself held his official position in connection with the railway servants' organisation, had intervened, and to some extent successfully. In 1897 there was a very serious dispute on the London and North-Western Railway, and a lord on that occasion assumed the same stubborn attitude that Lord Penrhyn had assumed in this case. The President of the Board of Trade, acting under the clause referred to, intervened, and so averted a strike which would probably have resulted from the dispute. More recently there was a dispute on the Great Eastern Railway, and in a few hours the men's notices would have been handed in, but the President of the Board of Trade intervened. The head of that railway was another great lord, who showed the same stubbornness, but the course taken by the President of the Board of Trade was successful in bringing about a settlement.

In the recent Taff Vale dispute, of which so much had been heard, the workmen had to deal with a railway manager who was equally stubborn. The President of the Board of Trade intervened in that case, sent a representative down, and was to some extent successful. At anyrate, he did assist in bringing to a conclusion that unhappy dispute. In that case the representative of the company sat in one room of an hotel and met the representative of the Board of Trade while he himself was in another room. Communications passed between them, but the company's representative declined to meet him personally. In this way that gentleman preserved his dignity. He did not stand on his own dignity. What he wanted was to do all he possibly could to bring the dispute to a conclusion. He thought that if, in the Penrhyn dispute, the President of the Board of Trade would pluck up courage it might be brought to a speedy conclusion. He was not going to enter into the merits or the demerits of the dispute. He was not going to argue whether the men were right or wrong. His point was that this dispute was causing suffering to the community, and that the President of the Board of Trade should send down a representative to see Lord Penrhyn. If Lord Penrhyn continued his stubbornness and stupidity, and refused to meet the representative of the Board of Trade, then that representative would have no alternative but to report on things as he found them. If Lord Penrhyn was too stubborn to give any information, that was his own affair.

The public would then decide. He had a certain amount of confidence in public opinion. He ventured to say that public opinion would very largely settle this question. At any rate they might give it a trial.

Lord Penrhyn was undoubtedly receiving a great deal of encouragement from gentlemen who assumed that workmen had no rights or privileges of any description. There were too many of that opinion in the country, and the day was not far distant when that would have to be broken down. If Lord Penrhyn snubbed the Government through the President of the Board of Trade he would not assist his own cause, because everybody would support the right hon. Gentleman in his action. If the President of the Board of Trade had no stronger reasons to give for non-interference, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would at once put the clause of the 1896 Act into operation regardless of what was to take place on Monday next. He appealed to the President of the Board of Trade to use the powers conferred on him by the 1896 Act, with the view of bringing about a settlement of the dispute.

*MR. LAWSON WALTON (Leeds, S.) said if he understood the President of the Board of Trade aright, the right hon. Gentleman had practically invalidated a very important provision in a clause of the Statute. The Statute clearly contemplated two alternatives in cases of dispute. The first arose where both parties were willing to place the matter in the hands of the Board of Trade; and the second where one of the parties invited intervention. But the statute contemplated a third condition of things, namely, where there was no arbitration, and no immediate prospect of a successful conciliation, but where the circumstances were such that the Department ought to be empowered to make an inquiry and publish a report for the enlightenment of the public.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I think I distinctly said that circumstances might arise which would justify the Board of Trade in appointing some person to inquire and report, but I think that the cases are very rare.

*MR. LAWSON WALTON said that the qualification of the right hon. Gentleman was very large. It scarcely left a conceivable case in which such an official might be appointed. If there was a case in which public opinion ought to be enlightened with regard to the merits of the dispute, this Penrhyn difficulty was clearly marked out for such treatment. This was a unique dispute. It had been prolonged over a considerable period of time, involved a large number of workmen, impaired the happiness of a large number of persons forming an exceptionally industrious, respectable, and self-respecting class of the community. There were well-known and capable gentlemen who could be appointed to report, and whose report would have great influence in the country. He should have liked to hear from the right hon. Gentleman why this course had not been taken, and why he had merely put forward an impotent *non possumus.* For these reasons he would support the Motion.

COLONEL PRYCE-JONES (Montgomery Boroughs) said he desired to offer a few words on this question as a Welsh Member. His hon. friend was wrong in finding fault with the President of the Board of Trade for not availing himself of the Act dealing with conciliation. It was a Voluntary Act, and both parties must agree upon a basis of the terms to be submitted to arbitration. He had listened to the whole debate, and he understood that Lord Penrhyn was not willing to give something the men wanted. It was not for Parliament to interfere between capital and labour in that respect. There were still 500 men working in the quarries at present. He believed it was a fact that Lord Penrhyn was losing thousands of pounds at the present time by working the quarries. Why should Lord Penrhyn be anxious to work the quarries at a loss? It was obvious that he was fighting for a very important principle. He was astounded at what had fallen from the hon. Baronet on the other side who was himself an employer of labour. No one could deny that Lord Penrhyn was a good employer [Laughter]—yes, better than the majority of employers throughout the country. He went further, and said that Lord Penrhyn was a model employer. [Laughter.] Hon. Members might laugh, but it was a fact that Lord Penrhyn was a model employer, with the exception that he would not give his quarrymen what they wanted. [Renewed laughter.] Up to 1885 a committee of workmen helped Lord Penrhyn to manage the quarries. At any rate the quarries did not pay at that time, although they had since paid. He was bound to say that he quite approved of the action of the President of the Board of Trade in not putting into operation the Conciliation Clause of the Act, and that he did not believe that, even if it had been put in operation, there was a chance of its being successful. He thought that this matter had better be left to Lord Penrhyn and the workpeople to settle among themselves than for Parliament to interfere.

*MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire) said that the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had spoken last alluded to Lord Penrhyn as a model employer. He could only say that his Lordship was of a class of employers which was swelling the ranks of the Socialists. If there were many more model employers of that kind the security of property would rapidly vanish into thin air. The President of the Board of Trade said he did not think there was any chance of this Act, if he attempted to put it in force, bringing this dispute to an end. Was that because the right hon. Gentleman thought Lord Penrhyn right or wrong? There was surely a chance if a conciliator had been appointed that he might have proved the men were wrong and Lord Penrhyn right, and the case would have been at an end at once. That was evidently not the view of the right hon. Gentleman. If the right hon. Gentleman thought the Act was not sufficiently strong for him why did he not introduce a Bill giving him compulsory powers? Did the right hon. Gentleman scout that idea? Was it not in the power of this Government, with its programme of great social reforms, to bring in such a Bill? He only threw out the suggestion which might yet find favour with the right hon. Gentleman, who, however, he imagined, believed Lord Penrhyn was in the wrong, otherwise he would have put the Act into operation.

Question put.

The House divided:— Ayes, 127; Noes, 157. (Division List No. 16)

AYES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barry, E. (*Cork, S.*)
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bell, Richard
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Saml. T. (*Glamorgan*)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*
Ffrench, Peter
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Holland, Sir William Henry
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (*Accrington*)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Markham, Arthur Basil
Middlemore, John Thr'gmorton
Morley, Charles (*Breconshire*)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, South*)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, Kendal (*Tipp'rary Mid*
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Donnell, T. (*Kerry, W.*)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (*Mayo, N.*)
O'Mara, James

Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Perks, Robert William
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (*Waterford*)
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C, R (*Northants*
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glamorgan, E.*)
Thomas, J A (*Glamorgan, Gower*
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Walton, John Lawson (*Leeds, S.*
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*)
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
White, Patrick (*Meath, North*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Wilson, Fred. W. (*Norfolk, Mid.*
Wilson, Henry J. (*York, W. R.*)
Wilson, John (*Durham, Mid.*)
Wood, James
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Mr. Herbert Roberts and
Mr. Brynmor Jones.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (*Hornsey*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos H. A. E.
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Cranborne, Lord
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Sir H. D. (*Chatham*)
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Garfit, William
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore, Hn. G. R. C Ormsby- (*Salop*
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (*West Ham*)
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hamilton, Marq. of (*Londondy*
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robt. Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashfd*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hutton, John (*Yorks, N. R.*)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawson, John Grant
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*)
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
More, Robt. Jasper (*Shropshire*)
Morgan, David J (*Walthamstow*
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Peel, Hn Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks*)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G. (*Oxf'd Univ.*
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (*Exeter*)
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (*Taunton*
Whiteley, H. (*Ashton und. Lyne*
Williams, Colonel R. (*Dorset*)
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York, E. R.*)
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (*Yorks*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

INCEST BILL.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) moved the Second Reading of the Incest Bill. He said that he had no wish to enter into any detailed explanation of this Bill, which dealt with a rather disagreeable subject. He believed there was no objection to its being referred to the Grand Committee on Law. He had been induced to introduce the Bill by the number of such crimes being committed in the rural districts of England, and he did not think that hon. Members would imagine that such crimes should not be severely punished.

MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire) said that this Bill proposed to make criminal certain offences which at the present time were not so. One had only to read the Bill to arrive at the conclusion that the offences with which it dealt ought to come within the scope of the criminal law. But, on the other hand, the Bill was very comprehensive, and brought in a number of matters which it was very desirable should be carefully considered by the responsible Law Officers of the Government, if it was to be proceeded with. The House should know from the Law Officers what was the view of the Government, and why this matter had not before been brought before them. They all knew that the law in Scotland on these matters was very different from that of England, and that there were certain offences in Scotland which were not only criminal but capital. Yet they knew that it was impossible to make the law operative, and that under these circumstances they were entitled to have some careful consideration on the part of the Law Officers of the Crown before they could say that the criminal law in England should be altered in the direction indicated in the Bill. There were some things which obviously ought to be made criminal offences, but there were others deserving of the closest scrutiny. He was not saying one word against the Bill, which he thought should be passed in some form, but it was a measure which ought to have been introduced and dealt with by the Government. Speaking for himself, he should like to know the views of the Government, and what attitude they proposed to take.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) said he hoped the Attorney General would give the House the views of the Government on this Bill. It was perfectly true that incest was a criminal offence in Scotland, but it was not now punishable with death. The death penalty was abolished a number of years ago, and the crime was now punishable with penal servitude. He did not think that there had been any convictions of recent years in Scotland under a law which was passed in 1567. At any rate, if a law against incest was to be put in force in England it ought to be put in force by responsible officers of the Crown, and not by private prosecution.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs) said he did not rise for the purpose of opposing the Second Reading of the Bill. On the part of everyone there must be very great sympathy with the feeling behind the introduction of the Bill; but it was a Bill which required very careful consideration in regard to its provisions. There were many matters which it was most desirous to check, but at the same time there were cases in which a most laudable and potent desire to check these evils might possibly lead, by methods of administration, to other and graver evils.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [2nd March]. "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed:—Debate resumed.

MR. CALDWELL said that this Bill had for its object a complete change in an Act passed very recently after careful discussion by this House. He believed that the provisions of the Act, so far as the general public were concerned, had given perfect satisfaction. Undoubtedly certain parties, who were probably actuated by a desire for scientific research and various matters of that kind, thought that to a certain extent they were hampered by the provisions of the Act, and they wanted the limitations placed on experiments on live animals by the Act of 1876 removed.

And, it being Midnight, the Debate stood Adjourned.

Debate to be resumed this day.

HOUSE OF COMMONS (KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS).

Ordered, that a Select Committee be appointed to control the arrangements for the Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms in the Department of the Serjeant at Arms attending this House.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of—Mr. James Bailey, Mr. Broadhurst, Sir Harry Bullard, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Dalziel, Sir Horatio Davies, Sir Thomas Firbank, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Leigh-Bennett, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Lonsdale, Dr. MacDonnell, Mr. Nicol, Mr. George Ormsby-Gore, Mr. Pierpoint, Mr. Power, and Mr. William Redmond.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That three be the quorum.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*)

PUBLIC PETITIONS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed, to whom shall be referred all Petitions presented to the House, with the exception of such as relate to Private Bills; and that such Committee do classify and prepare abstracts of the same, in such form and manner as shall appear to them best suited to convey to the House all requisite information respecting their contents, and do report the same from time to time to the House; and that the reports of the Committee do set forth the number of signatures to each Petition only in respect to those signatures to which addresses are affixed. And that such Committee have power to direct the printing *in extenso* of such Petitions, or of such parts of Petitions, as shall appear to require it: and that such Committee have power to report their opinion and observations thereupon to the House.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of—Mr. Allsopp, Mr. Edward Barry, Mr. Brymer, Sir Charles Dalrymple, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, General Laurie, Mr. Herbert Lewis, Sir Henry Meysey-Thompson, Mr. Charles Morley, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Tollemache, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, and Mr. Henry Joseph Wilson.

Ordered, That three be the quorum.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*)

Adjourned at three minutes after Twelve o'clock.

APPENDIX I.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CXVI.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the Lords.

(A.) HOUSE OF LORDS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Electric Lighting (London) [H.L.]	*Lord Wolverton*	Read 1^a 5th March (1479)
Light Locomotives (Ireland)		Read 1^a 3rd March (1220)
*Marine Insurance [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 1^a 24th Feb. (639)
Outdoor Relief (Friendly Societies)		Read 1^a 3rd March (1220)
*Prevention of Corruption [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 1^a 19th Feb. (262)
Shops (Early Closing) [H.L.]	*Lord Ribblesdale*	Read 1^a 19th Feb. (259)

(B.) HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Aged Pensioners	*Mr. Remnant*	Read 1 20th Feb. (402)
Aged Pensioners (No. 2)	*Mr. Samuel Roberts*	Read 1^o 24th Feb. (681)
Bank Holidays (Ireland)	*Mr. O'Mara*	Read 1^o 24th Feb. (682) Read 2^o 26th Feb. (1004)
Bankruptcy Law Amendment	*Sir Albert Rollit*	Read 1^o 23rd Feb. (514)
*Borough Funds	*Mr. Walter Long*	Read 1^o 5th March (1578)
Church Discipline	*Mr. David MacIver*	Read 1^o 20th Feb. (400)
Church Discipline (No. 2)	*Mr. Cripps*	Read 1^o 5th March (1577)
Coal Mines Regulation	*Mr. Markham*	Read 1^o 20th Feb. (402)
Colonial Marriages	*General Laurie*	Read 1^o 23rd Feb. (513)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Congested Districts (Scotland) Act (1897) Amendment	*Mr. John Dewar*	Read 1° 23rd Feb (513)
Conspiracy Law Amendment	*Mr. O'Dowd*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (402)
Coroner's Inquests (Railway Fatalities)	*Mr. Channing*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (407)
*County Councils (Bills in Parliament)	*Mr. Walter Long*	Read 1° 4th March (1366)
County Courts Jurisdiction Extension	*Sir Albert Rollit*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (406) Read 2° 26th Feb. (1016)
Criminal Aliens	*Sir Howard Vincent*	Read 1° 3rd March (1242)
Cruelty to Animals	*Sir Frederick Banbury*	Read 1° 23rd Feb. (636)
Detention of Poor Persons (Scotland)	*Mr. Baird*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (403)
Drunkenness and Registration of Clubs (Ireland)	*Mr. T. W. Russell*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (403)
Education (Scotland)	*Mr. Parker Smith*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (404)
Elementary Education Amendment	*Mr. Heywood Johnstone*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (403)
*Employment of Children	*Mr. Akers Douglas*	Read 1° 4th March (1422)
Foreign Shipowners' Liability	*Mr. Harry Samuel*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (403)
Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (405)
Hall-marking of Foreign Plate	*Mr. Samuel Roberts*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (402)
Housing of the Working Classes (London)	*Sir John Dickson-Poynder*	Read 1° 23rd Feb. (513)
Housing of the Working Classes (Repayment of Loans)	*Mr. Claude Hay*	Read 1° 5th March (1577)
Incest	*Colonel Lockwood*	Read 1° 24th Feb. (680) Read 2° 5th March (1683)
Innkeepers' Liability	*Sir Brampton Gurdon*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (401)
Jury Acts (Ireland) Amendment [22]	*Mr. O'Mara*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (404)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment	*Mr. Dillon*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (403)
Land Tenure	*Mr. Lambert*	Read 1° 5th March (1578)
Land Values Assessment and Rating	*Dr. Macnamara*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (400)
Leasehold Enfranchisement	*General Laurie*	Read 1° 23rd Feb. (513)
Leaseholders (Purchase of Fee Simple)	*Mr. Kearley*	Read 1° 23rd Feb. (514)
Libel	*Major Rasch*	Read 1° 2nd March (1216)
Licensing (Ireland)	*Mr. Hugh Law*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (405)
Licensing Law (Compensation for Non-Renewal)	*Mr. Butcher*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (401)
*Licensing (Scotland) Acts Amendment	*The Lord Advocate*	Read 1° 4th March (1384)
Light Locomotives (Ireland)	*Mr. Scott Montagu*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (404) Read 2° 26th Feb. (1004) Committee's Report Read 3° and passed 2nd March (1216)
Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland)	*Mr. Hunter Craig*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (406)
Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Wales)	*Mr. Herbert Roberts*	Read 1° 24th Feb. (680)
Local Authorities' Officers' Superannuation	*Captain Jessel*	Read 1° 3rd March (1242)
Local Government (Ireland)	*Mr. Duffy*	Read 1° 24th Feb. (681)
Local Government (Scotland) Act (1894) Amendment	*Mr. Cathcart Wason*	Read 1° 5th March (1577)
*Local Government (Transfer of Powers)	*Mr. Walter Long*	Read 1° 2nd March (1120)
Market Gardeners' Compensation	*Colonel Long*	Read 1° 4th March (1366)
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister	*Sir Gilbert Parker*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (401)
Medical Act (1858) Amendment	*General Laurie*	Read 1° 23rd Feb. (513)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Medical Act (1886) Amendment	*General Laurie*	Read 1° 23rd Feb. (513)
Medical Acts Amendment	*Sir John Batty Tuke*	Read 1° 23rd Feb. (513)
Merchandise Marks	*Sir Howard Vincent*	Read 1° 26th Feb. (938)
Merchant Shipping (Lighthouses)	*Mr. Charles M'Arthur*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (400)
Mines (Eight Hours)	*Mr. Ellis Griffith*	Read 1° 23rd Feb. (514)
Ministry of Commerce	*Mr. Louis Sinclair*	Read 1° 4th March (1366)
*Naval Forces	*Mr. Arnold-Forster*	Read 1° 4th March (1382) Read 2° 5th March (1649)
Old Age Pensions	*Mr. Channing*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (406)
Out-door Relief (Friendly Societies)	*Sir Edward Strachey*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (406) Read 2° 27th Feb. (1012) Committee Report read 3° and passed 2nd March (1215)
Pistols	*Mr. Helme*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (404)
Plumbers' Registration	*Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland*	Read 1° 25th Feb. (804)
Prevention of Disease (Fruit Trees)	*Sir James Rankin*	Read 1° 25th Feb. (804)
Prevention of Pollution of Rivers and Streams	*Sir Francis S. Powell*	Read 1° 24th Feb. (680)
Public Health	*Sir Francis S. Powell*	Read 1° 24th Feb. (681)
Public Houses (Hours of Closing) (Scotland)	*Sir John Stirling Maxwell*	Read 1° 5th March (1578)
Public Trustee	*Sir Howard Vincent*	Read 1° 26th Feb. (938)
Railways (Private Sidings)	*Sir John Brunner*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (401)
Rating of Machinery	*Mr. Chapman*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (400)
Roman Catholics' Disabilities Removal	*Dr. Robert Ambrose*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (404)
*Sale of Adulterated Butter	*Mr. Hanbury*	Read 1° 4th March (1407)
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Saturdays (Ireland)	*Mr. Sloan*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (402)
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday	*Mr. Perks*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (406)

(B.) HOUSE OF COMMONS—*continued.*

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
School Board Electorate (Scotland)	*Mr. Weir*	Read 1° 25th Feb. (805)
Shops	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (405)
Small Holders (Scotland)	*Mr. Black*	Read 1° 23rd Feb. (512)
Solicitors	*Sir Albert Rollit*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (406) Read 2° 27th Feb. (1026) (adjourned)
Steam Engines and Boilers Persons in Charge	*Mr. Fenwick*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (402)
Tied Houses (Abolition)	*Mr. Broadhurst*	Read 1° 5th March (1577)
Town Tenants (Ireland)	*Mr. Kendal O'Brien*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (404)
Trade Disputes	*Mr. Shackleton*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (401)
Trade Disputes Arbitration	*Mr. Nannetti*	Read 1° 2nd March (1120)
Trade Unions and Trade Disputes	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Read 1 24th Feb. (680)
Tramways (Hours of Labour)	*Mr. Nannetti*	Read 1° 25th Feb. (805)
Trustee Act (1893) Amendment	*Mr. Galloway*	Read 1° 2nd March (1216)
Vaccination	*Mr. Broadhurst*	Read 1° 5th March (1577)
Vaccination Prosecutions	*Mr. Channing*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (407)
Wages Boards	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Read 1° 20th Feb. (405)

APPENDIX II.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1903.

LIST OF RULES, ORDERS, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Factory and Workshop Acts (Particulars of Piece Work Wages) (Wholesale Tailoring),—Copy of Order, dated 5th January, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, applying, with modifications, the provisions of Section 116 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, to Factories and Workshops in which Wholesale Tailoring is carried on, and to Outworkers employed in Wholesale Tailoring, and the Occupiers and Contractors by whom they are employed [1 Edw. VII., c. 22, s. 126 (3)]	17 February	40 days
Factory and Workshop Acts (Sanitary Accommodation), —Copy of Order, dated 4th February, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 9 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, determining what is sufficient and suitable accommodation in the way of sanitary conveniences within the meaning of that section [1 Edw. VII., c. 22, s. 126 (3)]	17 February	40 days
Board of Agriculture Act, 1889,—Copy of Draft Order in Council transferring to the Board of Agriculture all the powers and duties which were conferred on the Commissioners of His Majesty's Works and Public Buildings in respect of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, by or in pursuance of Section 22 of The Crown Lands Act, 1851, or The Parks Regulation Act, 1872 [52 and 53 Vic., c. 30, s. 4]	17 February	30 days
Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks Acts,—Copy of Patents Rules, 1901, under the Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks Acts, 1883 to 1902 [46 and 47 Vic., c. 57, s. 101 (5)]	17 February	40 days
Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1899 (Rules for Retreats) (Ireland),—Copy of Rules for Retreats in Ireland licensed under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1899, dated 3rd February, 1903, approved by the Lord Lieutenant [61 and 62 Vic., c. 60, s. 21 (1)]	17 February	4 weeks (whilst the House is sitting)
Supreme Court of Judicature Act (Ireland), 1877,—Copies of two Orders in Council, dated 17th November, 1902, giving effect to Rules of Court [40 and 41 Vic., c. 57, s. 69]	17 February	100 sitting days
Intermediate Education (Ireland),—Copy of Time Table of Examinations for 1903 [41 and 42 Vic., c. 66, s. 6]	17 February	40 days
Intermediate Education (Ireland),—Copy of Additional Rule varying the Rules and Programme of Examinations for 1903 [41 and 42 Vic., c. 66, s. 6]	17 February	40 days

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Public Records (War Office),—Copy of Seventh Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents existing or accruing in the Office of His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the War Department, which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [40 and 41 Vic., c. 55, s. 1]	18 February	4 weeks
New South Wales (Women's Franchise Act, 1902),—Copy of the Women's Franchise Act, 1902 (New South Wales) [13 and 14 Vic., c. 59, s. 32]	25 February	30 days
New South Wales (Parliamentary Elections (Amendment) Act, 1902),—Copy of The Parliamentary Elections (Amendment) Act, 1902 (New South Wales) [13 and 14 Vic., c. 59, s. 32]	25 February	30 days
Sea Fisheries Regulation Act, 1888,—Copy of Order made by the Board of Trade, under the provisions of the said Act, for the variation of their Order creating the Devon Sea Fisheries District, together with Report by Inspector on Inquiry [51 and 52 Vic., c. 54, s. 1 (4)]	4 March	30 days

INDEX

TO THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[AUTHORISED EDITION].

FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1903.

FEBRUARY 17—*MARCH* 5.

EXPLANATION OF ARRANGEMENT AND ABBREVIATIONS.

Bills: Read First, Second, or Third Time = 1R., 2R., 3R. [*c.*] = Commons. [*l.*] = Lords. *Amendt.* = Amendment. *Os.* = Observations. *Qs.* = Questions. *As.* = Answers. *Com.* = Committee. *Con.* = Consideration. Where in the Index * is added with Reading of a Bill, or a Vote in Committee of Supply, it indicates that no Debate took place on that Stage of the Bill, or on that Vote. Subjects discussed in Committee of Supply are entered under their headings, and also under Members' Names, without reference to the actual Vote before the Committee.

Aberdeen, Earl of
Army Organisation—Travelling Allowances—Decrease in Numbers of Volunteers—Inquiry as to Government intentions with regard to Volunteers, *Mar. 5*, 1508.

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Explosion at MacLaren Colliery.
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Abraham, Mr. William [Cork Co., N.E.]
Sergeant Hyde, Royal Irish Constabulary.
'Charge and Proceedings against—Result of inquiry into circumstances of case, *Feb. 23*, 503.

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London Traffic, Serious increase in number of deaths from vehicular accidents, alleged — Advisability of bringing remedial measures for prevention of street accidents within the scope of Royal Commission on London Traffic, proposed.
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Q. Mr. C. Schwann; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Mar. 3*, 1235.

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British East Africa Protectorate. Report subsequent to that Presented to House, April, 1901, not yet Presented.
Q. Mr. H. Samuel; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *Mar. 4*, 1355.

Slavery In—Copy of Correspondence respecting, Presented, *Feb. 17*, 35, 52.

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Cape Town—Alleged Military Scandal, Investigation of.
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Q. Mr. Toulmin; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *Mar. 3*, 1224.
Garrison—Strength of British Forces—Speedy Reduction of Garrison.
Q. Mr. Lambert; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Feb. 19*, 276.
Mines—Employment of Native Labour in, Assistance given by Government to Mine-owners, Conditions of Employment, etc.
Q. Mr. Levy; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Feb. 23*, 481.
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Q. Mr. Trevelyan; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Mar. 4*, 1364.
Native Tax Ordinance—Levy of Tax instituted by—Relaxation of Law in regard to Districts in which Native Taxation was not previously Levied.
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Q. Mr. H. Samuel; A. Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *Feb. 19*, 281.

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Agrarian Outrages
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  Q. Mr. O'Shee; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Mar. 5*, 1570.

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  Q. Mr. Hayden; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Feb. 24*, 796.

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    Q. Mr. Field; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Feb. 19*, 288.

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Q. Mr. Cremer; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *Mar. 5*, 1542.
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Qs. Mr. Crean, Mr. J. O'Donnell, Mr. Flavin; *As.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *Mar. 2*, 1118.
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Q. Mr. Nannetti; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *Feb. 24*, 670.

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